

**Hope for Regeneration:  
Increasing Civic Intentions and Values in Young People**

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## **Abstract**

Civic engagement is integral to healthy communities and a functioning democracy, yet recent evidence suggests that it is declining, especially among young people. The purpose of this thesis is to address the recent decline by exploring ways by which to increase civic intentions and civic values in young people. To this end, three interventions were investigated. Studies 1a and 1b explored the potential of community-based young changemaker (ReGeneration) events to increase civic intentions (Study 1a) and civic values (Study 1b). The findings from Studies 1a and 1b revealed that ReGeneration events increased civic intentions and civic values, whereas the controls experienced no such changes. Furthermore, generosity uniquely contributed to civic values outcomes after controlling for initial levels of civic values, well-being and civic intentions. A factor analysis revealed that a revised, shorter civic values scale was a better fit in the present context.

Study 2 explored the potential for a prosocial behaviour reflection and writing task to influence civic values, happiness and future prosocial spending decisions (i.e. how participants chose to spend a surprise \$10 windfall). The findings from Study 2 revealed that (a) following the writing task all participants experienced increases in civic values; and (b) happier people were more likely to spend their money prosocially, regardless of what they wrote about. Neither writing task topic nor windfall spending decision influenced levels of civic values or happiness.

Study 3 explored the potential for acute inclusion or exclusion feedback to impact sense of belonging, civic engagement and well-being. The findings from Study 3 revealed that excluded participants had a lower sense of community belonging, but not other differences in well-being or civic engagement compared to the included or no feedback

(control) participants. There were no differences between the included and no feedback groups in terms of belonging, civic engagement or well-being.

Taken together, results suggest that the most promising findings in terms of increasing civic intentions and civic values were from the community sample, as ReGeneration participants experienced significant increases in both compared to controls (Studies 1a and 1b), although a brief writing task also increased civic values (Study 2). To this effect, the present thesis describes novel ways by which to cultivate civic values, and highlights ways by which to address the recent civic engagement decline. The implications of these results are discussed in terms of theory and practice, and suggestions for future research directions are made.

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## Table of Contents

<b>Abstract.....</b>	<b>i</b>
<b>Acknowledgements .....</b>	<b>iii</b>
<b>Table of Contents .....</b>	<b>v</b>
<b>List of Tables .....</b>	<b>vii</b>
<b>List of Figures.....</b>	<b>viii</b>
 <b>Chapter 1: Thesis Overview and Literature Review .....</b>	 <b>1</b>
Civic Engagement Definition .....	2
Civic Engagement and Democracy.....	5
Civic Engagement Decline .....	6
Measuring Civic Engagement.....	8
Civic Engagement and Young People .....	9
Increasing Civic Engagement .....	11
Summary .....	18
 <b>Chapter 2: Increasing Civic Intentions and Civic Values through ReGeneration Events</b>	
<b>.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Study 1a: Increasing Civic Intentions.....</b>	<b>20</b>
Introduction.....	20
Study 1a Methods .....	22
Study 1a Results.....	28
Study 1a Discussion.....	31
<b>Study 1b: Increasing Civic Values.....</b>	<b>33</b>
Introduction.....	33
Study 1b Methods .....	37
Study 1b Results .....	41
Study 1b Discussion.....	50
<b>Study 1 General Discussion.....</b>	<b>50</b>
 <b>Chapter 3: Happiness, Civic Values and Prosocial Behaviour.....</b>	 <b>59</b>
Introduction.....	59
Literature Review.....	61

Study 2 Methods .....	69
Study 2 Results .....	75
Study 2 Discussion.....	88
<b>Chapter 4: Belonging and Civic Engagement .....</b>	<b>100</b>
Introduction.....	100
Literature Review.....	102
Study 3 Methods .....	109
Study 3 Results .....	112
Study 3 Discussion.....	118
<b>Chapter 5: General Discussion .....</b>	<b>124</b>
Summary of Findings.....	124
Limitations .....	129
Future Research .....	130
Implications.....	132
Conclusions.....	135
<b>References.....</b>	<b>138</b>
<b>Appendices.....</b>	<b>165</b>

**List of Tables**

Table 1.1	<i>Correlations between T1 Civic Intentions, Age and SES.....</i>	28
Table 1.2	<i>Civic Intentions Means for Men and Women, ReGeneration and Filmmaking Groups at T1.....</i>	30
Table 1.3	<i>Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Intentions at T2.....</i>	31
Table 1.4	<i>Mean Civic Intentions Scores for ReGeneration and Filmmaking Groups as a Function of Time.....</i>	31
Table 1.5	<i>Factor Loadings and Communalities for 12 Items from the AEC Civic Duty Scale (N = 116) .....</i>	43
Table 1.6	<i>Correlations between Civic Values at T1, Age and SES for all Participants.....</i>	44
Table 1.7	<i>Civic Values at T1 Means for Men and Women, Minority and Majority Ethnicities, and ReGeneration and Surveying Groups.....</i>	45
Table 1.8	<i>Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T2 .....</i>	46
Table 1.9	<i>Mean Levels of Civic Values for ReGeneration and Surveying Camp Participants across Time .....</i>	47
Table 1.10	<i>Correlations between T2 Civic Values, T1 Civic Values, Civic Intentions, Generosity and Well-being for ReGeneration Participants.....</i>	48
Table 1.11	<i>Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T2.....</i>	49
Table 2.1	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Civic Values and Happiness at T1 for Males and Females, Minority and Majority Ethnicities.....</i>	75
Table 2.2	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Happiness across T1 and T2 as a Function of Writing Task Condition.....</i>	76
Table 2.3	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Civic Values across T1 and T2 as a Function of Writing Task Condition.....</i>	78
Table 2.4	<i>Correlations between Civic Engagement and Well-being Variables at T2 for all Participants.....</i>	79
Table 2.5	<i>Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T2.....</i>	80



Table 2.6	<i>Number of People in each Windfall Spending Group as a Function of Writing Task Group.....</i>	82
Table 2.7	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Happiness for Writing Task Conditions across Time.....</i>	83
Table 2.8	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Civic Values for Writing Task Conditions across Time.....</i>	85
Table 2.9	<i>Correlations between Civic Engagement and Well-being Variables at T3 for all Participants.....</i>	86
Table 2.10	<i>Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T3.....</i>	87
Table 3.1	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Key Variables as a Function of Sex</i>	113
Table 3.2	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Key Variables as a Function of Ethnic Group.....</i>	113
Table 3.3	<i>Means (and Standard Deviations) of Key Variables as a Function of Included, Excluded, and No Feedback Groups .....</i>	114
Table 3.4	<i>ANOVA Statistics Comparing Mean Belonging, Civic Engagement and Well-being between Feedback Groups.....</i>	115
Table 3.5	<i>Correlations between the Key Variables for the Included Group.....</i>	116
Table 3.6	<i>Correlations between the Key Variables for the No Feedback Group.....</i>	117
Table 3.7	<i>Correlations between the Key Variables for the Excluded Group.....</i>	118

### List of Figures

Figure 2.1	<i>Mean Happiness across Time (T1, T2) as a Function of Writing Task Group.....</i>	77
Figure 2.2	<i>Mean Civic Values across Time (T1, T2) as a Function of Writing Task Group.....</i>	78
Figure 2.3	<i>Mean Happiness Scores across Time (T1, T2, T3) as a Function of Writing Task Group .....</i>	84
Figure 2.4	<i>Means of Civic Values across Time (T1, T2, T3) as a Function of Windfall Spending Group.....</i>	86

## Chapter 1: Thesis Overview and Literature Review

“It is not easy to build a sturdy democracy. Even in long-established ones, democracy can corrode if not nurtured and protected,” (Laza Keric, 2015, p. 2).

Civic engagement is a collection of values and behaviours that suggest that people believe their lives and goals are connected to others, and they are committed to creating a better society (Flanagan & Christens, 2013; Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2009). The importance of engagement to healthy societies and democracies cannot be understated - it is through civic engagement and the exercise of citizen rights and responsibilities that democracy is sustained. However, evidence suggests that civic engagement is declining in Aotearoa New Zealand, especially among young New Zealanders (Catt, 2005; Vowles, 2004, 2012). Low levels of engagement have caught the attention of researchers, educators, and policy-makers as values and behaviours tend to solidify in adolescence – if a young person fails to vote when they first become eligible they are less likely to vote in future elections (Coppock & Green, 2015; Plutzer, 2002). This tide of disengagement has implications for democracy as well as for young people’s capacity to address the “unprecedented challenges facing society” (Cogan & Derricott, 2014, p. 6).

The present thesis explores the potential for two key aspects of civic engagement – civic intentions and civic values - to be increased in three ways. Study 1 examines a youth programme that supports young changemakers (i.e., people working to make positive change) to make a difference in their communities, nationally and globally. Study 2 explores the roles of prosocial behaviour recall, prosocial identity, and happiness in influencing civic values. Study 3 explores the influence of acute inclusion and exclusion on levels of civic values. Through the diverse interventions examined here, I hope to elucidate ways by which to nurture civic values in young people, and address youth disengagement.

## **Civic Engagement Definition**

The term ‘civic engagement’ has a variety of definitions that depend on the context, the field, the focus, and the time at which the definition was made. This section will explore several definitions, as well as the theories of civic engagement that are relevant to the present thesis, that is, civic engagement that is linked to and can elucidate young people’s intentions, behaviour and values.

Jack Vowles (2004) in his inaugural professorial address at The University of Auckland stated that:

Civic engagement is here understood as involving instrumental collective action towards achieving particular social and political purposes. Under this instrumental aspect of ‘civic engagement’ one can identify a number of components of political participation, namely voting, membership in political parties, and supporting the activities of political parties, social movements, and candidates for national and local elections, by way of financial contributions and/or activism (p. 1).

Vowles (2004) further refines his definition by stating that not all forms of civic engagement are equal, and highlights his point by suggesting that voluntary work for organisations that may not have a specific political aim would be better described as participation – thus, Vowles’ definition of civic engagement excludes most group and community-based participation. Community-based engagement is sometimes thought of as a softer form of politics, a viewpoint that may lead to people underestimating its role in the condition of democracy, as well as the degree to which young people are civically engaged. Wood (2011) describes Vowles’ form of civic engagement as ‘adult centric,’ and suggests that researchers will not fully understand young people’s civic engagement until they value diverse forms of civic engagement equally (see also Flanagan, 2013).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Likewise, social and developmental psychologists tend to use different definitions of civic engagement. Flanagan and Faison (2001) use the word civic to describe both political (meaning affairs of the state, business or government) and civil society (non-profit and non-governmental organisations or groups that work to enhance the quality of communities and society; see Bobek, 2007). ‘Civic’ in this sense is broader than the term political, as it not only includes formal aspects of government or business, but also people who actively work to solve social issues and increase social capital (i.e. the benefits that arise from social networks and norms of trust and reciprocity; Sanders & Putnam, 2010).

Sherrod and Lauckhardt (2008) put forward a three-part model that incorporates both the political and civil aspects of civic engagement: 1) concern for others and tolerance; 2) political involvement or civic activities; and 3) allegiance, attachment, membership. This model is useful especially when studying young populations as it includes types of activities that young people participate in. Incorporating membership, although controversial, is important, as membership involves both rights and responsibilities and can provide democratic practice, which may be key in civic engagement development. Young members can take responsibility for the integrity of an organisation, be exposed to different worldviews, and exercise their voice in deliberation and negotiation (Flanagan & Faison, 2001).

Along a similar vein, concern for others and tolerance are considered by some researchers to be key parts of citizenship and necessary for political participation (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010). Especially in the adolescent and emerging adult literatures, the concepts of empathy, prosocial behaviour, morality, community service and activism are key features of the civic engagement discussion. These features are not, however, universally acknowledged forms of civic engagement (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, et al., 2010). For example, the definition used by Vowles (2004) does not include concern for others and tolerance.

In the context of adolescence and emerging adulthood, it is important to note that civic engagement does not solely involve traditional forms of political participation, such as voting or campaigning for a politician. This is true for several reasons. First, although some adolescents take part in certain political activities (i.e., volunteering for political campaigns), more generally they do not engage in traditional political behaviours until they are at least 18 (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, et al., 2010), and they are formally excluded from many political activities (e.g., voting). The current population of emerging adults may also be slow to take on traditional forms of political participation. This trend echoes the protracted pace that today's industrial world causes young adults to shift into the roles that their contemporaries took up at their age (such as marriage and career choice; see Arnett, 2006). Thus, some theorists predict that voting may be delayed for younger generations, and possibly increasingly so (Finlay, Wray-Lake, & Flanagan, 2010).

Second, an additional reason to include non-traditional forms of engagement when discussing youth citizenship is that recent research suggests that young people are finding new ways of expressing political opinions. For example, many adolescents are undecided about formal politics, but are more engaged in community work (Kiesa et al., 2007), political consumerism and lifestyle politics than their predecessors (Flanagan & Christens, 2013; Micheletti & Stolle, 2008). Finlay et al. (2010) describe the “story of each generations’ struggle to define and redefine civic engagement in the context of their circumstances” (p. 284). And as young people redefine what it means to be civically engaged, it leads to difficulty in drawing “clear conclusions about the role of youth participation and the impact on civil society and democracy” (Bobek, 2007 p. 33).

Third, it is important to be aware of cultural and contextual differences when interpreting civic action. Young people have diverse capacities and cultures (McCollum, 2016) and therefore actions and beliefs could easily be misinterpreted (Lansdown, 2010).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Cross-cultural evidence supports this point. Recent research from China suggests that neighbourhood connection, not broader social capital, is a strong predictor of political participation (Xu, 2010). This is in stark contrast to American findings showing that social capital is a key predictor of almost all forms of civic activities (Bobek, 2007; Putnam, 2001). Research in Aotearoa New Zealand suggests that for many Māori the concept of volunteering doesn't encompass their experiences of nonpaid work for whānau (family), iwi (tribe), organisations, and other individuals. Instead, the term “mahi aroha – work performed out of love, sympathy or caring and through a sense of duty” is considered a more appropriate term (Raihanian & Walker, 2007, p.1).

For these reasons, the definition of civic engagement needs to allow for the organic nature of civic action and belief systems as well as the changing needs and challenges of each generation. For the purpose of the present thesis, civic engagement is defined as the values and behaviours that encompass and lead to a prosocial contribution to community and society (Flanagan & Christens, 2013; Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2009; Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, & Flanagan, 2016). The present thesis focuses on two important aspects of civic engagement, civic values and civic intentions.

## Civic Engagement and Democracy

Despite little consensus on the definition or measurement of democracy (L. Diamond, 2008), there are minimal requirements that are generally accepted as important to a democracy, such as equality, freedom, “a government based on majority rule, free and fair elections, the protection of minorities and respect for basic human rights” (Keric, 2010, p. 1).

Freedom House (a US-based democracy watchdog organisation; see Karatnycky & Ackerman, 2004) outlines that democracy is not dichotomous; countries can sit anywhere on

the democracy continuum, and both progress and lapse as they move along the scale of government representation. For this reason, participation is essential to democracy, as a functioning government, political culture, and civil liberties cannot exist without people involved and driving them. In turn, “achievement of well-being, the advancement of social equity, and the advancement of social inclusiveness in Aotearoa New Zealand society depend, among other things, on a robust and healthy democracy” (Vowles, 2000, p.150).

### **Civic Engagement Decline**

Globally, 2016 was a year that highlighted low levels of youth voter turnout. In the recent general election in the United States, 50% of emerging adults (age 18-29) voted (CIRCLE, 2016), with an overall turnout rate of 58% (one of the lowest in the OECD; Pew Research Centre, 2016). Likewise, for the United Kingdom June 2016 ‘Brexit’ referendum on leaving or staying in the European Union (EU), 64% of emerging adults made it to the polls, as compared to 72% of overall eligible voters (Bruter & Harrison, 2016). Considering the ‘leave’ vote won the referendum by a margin of 52% to 48%, and young people massively supported staying in the EU, a higher youth turnout could have swung the referendum in the other direction (Bruter & Harrison, 2016).

During the 2014 Aotearoa New Zealand general election (amid media scandal and claims of ‘dirty politics’; see Hager, 2014) the overall percentage of those who were eligible to vote and did vote was 77% (OECD, 2015). However, the emerging adult (18-30) age group had the lowest numbers of voters as the percentage of enrolled voters – about 62% (Electoral Commission, 2014). This trend is similar to the 2011 election when the under 30 age group made up the largest portion of eligible voters who did not enrol (67%; Wilson, 2011). This downward turnout trend has led the Aotearoa New Zealand Electoral Commission to prioritise civics education, in the hope that low turnout will not continue (Collins, 2012).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

There is some hope that while participation in conventional forms of politics (like voting) is in decline, people may make up for this through participation in unconventional forms (Vowles, 2004). Non-electoral participation has been shown in many western countries to link strongly to political participation (Putnam, 1995), yet it is still unclear what these changes in the composition of participation will mean for democracy in the future (Bobek, 2007).

However, evidence suggests that other types of civic engagement besides traditional political engagement may also be in decline. These include membership in associations, non-profit work, and volunteering. Concepts such as membership are difficult to quantify, as the political and civil landscape of Aotearoa New Zealand is uniquely influenced by the indigenous Māori culture, where membership and volunteering merge with normal whānau (family and extended family) obligations (Raihanian & Walker, 2007; Sibley & Liu, 2007). Therefore, while some reports suggest that Aotearoa New Zealand association membership is declining (Vowles, 2004), other reports suggest that it is still very high, especially when likened to other comparable countries such as Britain or Australia (Miranda, 2011; OECD, 2015). Evidence from the International Civic and Citizenship Education study (Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Oswald, & Schulz, 2001) suggests that young adolescents in Aotearoa New Zealand have modest levels of civic engagement and knowledge compared to other countries (Bolstad, 2012). Likewise, Hayhurst (2014) reported that in a diverse sample of over 400 young New Zealanders (secondary students, tertiary students, and youth programme participants), 41% intended to volunteer in the future, 47% intended to vote, and 26% agreed that being involved in community issues was their responsibility. Taken together, these figures suggest that youth civic engagement in Aotearoa New Zealand is generally low.



## Measuring Civic Engagement

The purpose of the present thesis is to explore ways to increase civic engagement. To this end, I needed measurement tools that were sensitive to (a) the diverse ways that young people express civic engagement, and (b) brief interventions aimed to increase engagement.

Several lines of work have used behavioural or membership measures as indicators of civic engagement. The majority of the research literature to date has focused on whether those eligible to vote actually do, as opposed to looking at pre-voting age individuals (A. K. Cohen & Chaffee, 2012). In comparison, Hayhurst (2014) measured civic behaviours on a yearly basis (e.g., how often have you helped a neighbour in the last year?). However, changes in yearly levels of civic behaviours, voting, and group involvement could not be measured over the brief time periods examined in the present thesis.

Therefore, the present thesis instead explored two aspects of civic engagement – civic intentions and civic values. Civic intentions (also referred to as civic commitments; see Kahen & Spote, 2008) included people's expected likelihood of engaging in community and political acts, such as volunteering and voting, in the future. Intentions are particularly useful when studying younger populations as participants can indicate whether they will participate in civic acts they are currently excluded from (e.g., voting) once they become eligible. Civic intentions also describe both the political and community aspects of civic engagement, incorporating different theories of citizenship, while acknowledging the importance of both to healthy societies and democracy (Bobek, 2007; Wood, 2011).

Civic behaviours and intentions are important to healthy communities and societies, as it's through civic acts that democracy is sustained. However, Zaff, Boyd, Li, Lerner, and Lerner (2010) ask "whether the act of participation, that is, civic behaviour, is sufficient to attain these individual and societal benefits, or whether a deeper, more substantive

## Increasing Civic Engagement

engagement is necessary” (p. 736). Likewise, Larson (2000) proposed that civic engagement consists of intrinsic motivation and drive to engage with challenges. This deeper, more holistic commitment to citizenship is described as a sense of civic duty – the values that lead people to give back to their communities and society. Civic duty and values will be described in more detail in Study 1b.

## Civic Engagement and Young People

“Adolescence and the transition to adulthood are the developmental periods when civic values and commitments take shape” (Finlay et al., 2010 p.277).

Adolescence is a broad term that refers to the biological, psychological, and social maturation that occurs roughly during the second decade of life (Pharo, Gross, Richardson, & Hayne, 2011). Emerging adulthood is a relatively recent term devised to describe an extended period of exploration and identity development that occurs mostly for people in industrialised cultures in their third decade of life (Arnett, 2000, 2006). For the purpose of this thesis the group of people that these developmental stages encompass will be labelled ‘young people’. Because civic identity tends to start developing during adolescence and solidifies during emerging adulthood (Obradović & Masten, 2007), the present thesis will cover both developmental stages. Civic engagement shows heterotypic developmental discontinuity, meaning that the construct and the values and behaviours that express it change in important ways across development (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, et al., 2010). The broad range of ages examined in this thesis aims to capture some of these important changes.

Adolescence and emerging adulthood are developmental stages that encompass physical, cognitive, emotional, and social changes - changes that coincide and allow for emerging civic engagement. For example, changes to the prefrontal cortex and expanding

connections throughout the brain (Steinberg, 2005) allow for the development of sociocognitive skills, motivation, and regulatory capacities during adolescence that are believed to be responsible for the development of moral reasoning, prosocial behaviour and civic tendencies (Agans et al., 2014). These new skills allow young people to engage in complex introspection, problem solving, reflection, as well as abstract and future thinking (Gentry & Campbell, 2002) – essentially development that allows for a “more fully conscious, self-directed and self-regulating mind” (Steinberg, 2005, p. 70). Variability in cognitive competencies suggests that not all people realise their full potential, and highlights the need for identifying the environments and experiences that support young people’s development (Kuhn, 2009).

Youth is a time of both risk and opportunity (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Traditionally youth research was concerned with youth challenges – incidence of drug and alcohol abuse, unplanned pregnancy, violence, risky behaviour, depression, anxiety and self-harm. In turn, programmes and interventions focused on preventing or correcting these challenges. Youth researchers such as Benson and colleagues (2010), Larson (2000), and Lerner, Lerner and colleagues (R. M. Lerner et al., 2005; R. M. Lerner, Lerner, Bowers, & Geldhof, 2015) suggest a paradigm shift that entails viewing youth not as problems to be managed, but as resources to be developed (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). Positive youth development (PYD) capitalises on this concept by framing how we understand youth development, how we promote best practice (Bowers, Johnson, et al., 2014; Hamilton, 1999), and how we understand the bidirectional relationship between the individual and context that directs young people towards a thriving developmental path (Bowers, Geldhof, Johnson, Lerner, & Lerner, 2014; Hamilton, 2014). In this way, PYD is a strengths-based approach that embodies “our hopes and aspirations for a nation of healthy, happy and competent

## Increasing Civic Engagement

adolescents on the way to productive and satisfying adulthoods” (Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2000, p.3).

One approach to PYD of particular relevance to civic engagement is summarised by Lerner, Lerner and colleagues’ five Cs: Competence, Confidence, Connections, Character, and Caring (Eccles, Barber, Stone, & Hunt, 2003; R. M. Lerner et al., 2005). In this model the broader ecology of human development assets such as positive and sustained adult-youth relationships, youth development programmes, and adolescent strengths lead to the five Cs which in turn lead to a reduction in risk behaviours and the sixth C; contribution (R. M. Lerner, 2004). Contribution - the ability for young people to give back to their families, communities and nations - is closely aligned with the concept of civic engagement.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

The overarching aim of the present thesis is to elucidate ways to increase two aspects of civic engagement – civic intentions and values. While there is extant research on the correlates of civic engagement and interventions that promote related concepts (e.g., civic knowledge, volunteering), there is limited research on interventions - especially brief interventions - that increase civic engagement. This next section will briefly describe potential psychosocial contributors of civic engagement, and comparable interventions from the PYD and positive psychology literatures.

There are several relatively consistent demographic predictors of civic engagement, including socioeconomic status, ethnicity, culture and education (Duke, Skay, Pettingell, & Borowsky, 2009; Levinson, 2010; McCollum, 2016) - however these predictors are outside the scope of the present study, as they are not easily influenced by brief interventions.

Psychosocial factors that contribute to civic engagement that may be influenced by

interventions include (but are not limited to) well-being (Study 1), generosity and civic identity (Study 2), and a sense of belonging (Study 3). Each of these factors will be discussed in turn below.

Well-being describes how people feel and function in their lives (Hone, Jarden, Duncan, & Schofield, 2015; Mackay, Schofield, Jarden, & Prendergast, 2015). Ryan and Deci (2001) suggested in their review of the field that well-being is organised into hedonic (happiness and positive affect) and eudaimonic (meaning and potential) traditions. Both are important to civic engagement, particularly in regard to young people and civic engagement. For example, happiness and positive affect are needed for sustained involvement in complex challenges, as they inspire and motivate people (Harré, 2011). Further, eudaimonia (i.e. striving toward excellence based on one's unique potential; see Ryff & Singer, 2008) is enhanced when people work to create positive change and their behaviours are congruent with their values (Waterman, 1993), strengths (Seligman, 2002), and prosocial selves (Steger, Kashdan, & Oishi, 2008). Analogously to how the 5Cs of PYD can lead to contribution (R. M. Lerner, Lerner, & Benson, 2011), when people have high well-being they are more likely to have the energy and resources to be effective citizens.

Interpersonal generosity is the inclination and tendency to freely give one's time, talents, or treasures to others (Collett & Morrissey, 2007; Hayhurst, 2010). It is an important antecedent to strong communities and healthy societies (Generosity Hub, 2010; United Nations, 2003), and therefore, a potential precondition of civic engagement. To the best of my knowledge, there are no empirical studies exploring the relationship between interpersonal generosity and civic engagement. However, research has linked civics to related concepts such as empathy (Eisenberg & Fabes, 1990), prosocial behaviour (Grant et al., 2009), concern for others and tolerance (Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2008), and helping (Isen, 2001). Likewise, recent international evidence connects generosity to subjective well-being,

## Increasing Civic Engagement

and suggests it might be a universal predictor of happiness (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013).

Civic identity is a blurry concept closely related to prosocial identity, “the dimension of the self-concept focused on helping and benefiting others” (Grant, Molinsky, Margolis, Kamin, & Schiano, 2009, p.321) and moral identity, “a self-conception organized around a set of moral traits” (Aquino & Reed, 2002, p. 1424). In their influential manuscript on civic engagement, Youniss and Yates (1997) suggested that civic identity may be what links civic engagement to positive development; participation in organised groups introduces young people to the organisational practices required for civic engagement, and participation nurtures civic values at a key point in identity development. However, Youniss and Yates did not explain how civic identity is distinct from civic values, duty or social responsibility – and research since has not rectified this ambiguity. Civic identity will be examined more closely in Study 2.

A sense of belonging is considered a core human motive (Leary, Tambor, Terdal, & Downs, 1995) that predicts positive youth development (R. M. Lerner, 2004), and is central to identity and well-being (Jetten, Haslam, & Haslam, 2012). Extensive research has linked aspects of belonging such as connection to family, school and community to civic behaviours (e.g. voting, volunteering; see Duke et al, 2009; Sherrod, Torney-Purta et al., 2010). While there are several diverse pathways that a sense of belonging can lead to civic engagement, the mechanisms by which these relations work are still being debated (Pancer, 2015). Sherrod (2007), however, summarised succinctly by explaining that young people “must feel a connection in order to want to contribute,” (Sherrod, 2007 p.64).

Therefore, while the psychosocial factors (see the following section) that link youth participation to adult civic engagement remain ambiguous, extant evidence suggests that

adolescence and emerging adulthood are critical ages for encouraging engaged citizenship. Considering civic engagement as a context for positive youth development emphasises the reciprocal nature of individual and environmental assets (Sherrod, 2007), suggesting there is enormous potential for civic interventions to foster a lifetime of civic behaviour and values.

**Interventions.** As stated previously, there has been little empirical research on interventions that aim to increase civic engagement (Michelsen, Zaff, & Hair, 2002). For this reason, we need to borrow frameworks from related positive psychology, positive youth development, education and service learning fields, in order to clarify how interventions can enhance participation.

Positive psychology has offered numerous interventions since its conception two decades ago. Of particular relevance to the present thesis are interventions that aim to enhance eudaimonia – well-being derived from achieving one’s potential and engaging in meaningful endeavours (Ryan & Deci, 2001; Seligman, 2002; Steger et al., 2008). For example, Seligman, Steen, Park and Peterson (2005) found that interventions which asked people to reflect on eudaimonic activities (e.g., recent prosocial behaviour, writing about good things that happened each day, using signature strengths in a new way, gratitude visits) for a week led to increases in happiness and decreases in depression. In a diary study, Steger and colleagues (2008) found that individuals who reported engaging in more eudaimonic behaviours (e.g., helping someone or cheering them up, studying extra hard, being extra kind) reported greater well-being compared to those who engaged in hedonic behaviours (watching TV or a movie, shopping, eating sweets). Conversely, Huta and Ryan (2010) found that hedonically motivated activities had more short-term benefits for well-being, while eudaimonically motivated activities had more long-term (three month) well-being benefits. Meta analyses of positive psychology interventions find that they vary significantly based on

## Increasing Civic Engagement

length, recruitment processes, and the effectiveness of the evaluation (i.e., poorer methods predicted better outcomes; see Bolier et al., 2013; Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009) .

Despite the limited research on civic engagement programmes, there has been considerable research on related programmes, such as youth development (Lerner et al., 2004), service learning (Metz & Youniss, 2005; Youniss & Yates, 1997), civics education (Flanagan, Stoppa, Syvertsen, & Stout, 2010; Torney-Purta et al., 2001), environmental sustainability (Blythe & Harré, 2012) and extracurricular activities (McFarland & Thomas, 2006; Scales, Benson, Leffert, & Blyth, 2000).

In terms of youth-focused programmes, recent research has capitalised on the PYD movement to explore how programmes and interventions can enhance positive outcomes such as resilience, self-esteem and belonging in young people (Hunter et al., 2010; Kafka et al., 2012; Scarf, Moradi, et al., 2016). Generally, youth development programmes seek to prevent risk behaviours by building competencies through social support, skill-building, self-efficacy, belonging and successful engagement with challenges (Hayhurst, Hunter, Kafka, & Boyes, 2015; R. M. Lerner, 2004; Roth & Brooks-Gunn, 2003). In this way, effective programmes create a series of positive chain reactions (Hunter et al., 2010) highlighting the relationship between individual and environmental assets. Promising research from several fields including adolescent development (Theokas & Lerner, 2006), child development (A. Diamond & Lee, 2011; Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger, 2011) and neuroplasticity (Davidson & McEwen, 2012) highlight the potential for interventions to reduce stress and promote well-being, especially when multiple contextual features are considered. In terms of civic engagement, Lerner and colleagues (2003) suggest that when young people are supported by their environments and express high levels of competence, confidence, connections, character, and caring they are more likely to be engaged in and want to give back to their communities (see also Sherrod, 2007).



Schools can play an important role in young people's participation through civics education, school climate, and service-learning programmes. Civics education focuses on civic content and skills and emphasises the importance of the election process (Torney-Purta, 2002; Torney-Purta et al., 2001). An open, democratic and participatory school climate means that students have opportunities to express their opinions, take on responsibility and leadership roles, and respectfully disagree with teachers, leading to higher sense of civic responsibility and community engagement (Flanagan, Cumsille, Gill, & Galloway, 2007; Flanagan et al., 2010). Hayhurst (2010) found that diverse schools in a region of Aotearoa New Zealand had generosity-focused civic programming, whether it be widespread and structured (i.e., accredited community service classes) or informal (i.e., staff acknowledgement when students had "done good stuff," p. 20).

Finally, a large body of literature has been dedicated to the antecedents and consequences of prosocial behaviour in adolescence, in particular community service, service-learning and volunteering. Volunteering is defined as "any activity in which time is given freely to benefit another person, group, or organization" (J. Wilson, 2000, p. 215). Generally the research suggests that youth volunteering can lead to a number of positive outcomes (Stukas, Snyder, & Clary, 2016; J. Wilson, 2012) including increased confidence and character (Lerner et al., 2005), empathy (Brown et al., 2011), improved academic performance (Flanagan, Cumsille, et al., 2007; Lawford, Ramey, Rose-Krasnor, & Proctor, 2012; Markus, Howard, & King, 1993), social responsibility (Pancer & Pratt, 1999; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011), prosocial identity and values (Hart et al., 2007; Yates & Youniss, 1998), as well as improvements in social capital and social trust (Putnam, 1995; Stukas, Snyder, et al., 2016). Research suggests these benefits tend to arise from an increased sense of belonging and community connection, exposure to diverse peoples, and increases in one's sense of self-efficacy in being able to address social issues (see Stukas et al., 2016; J. Wilson

## Increasing Civic Engagement

2000; 2012 for reviews). Research shows that people who volunteer when they are young develop knowledge of community needs and tend to continue volunteering as adults (Billig, 2000; Obradović & Masten, 2007; Youniss, McLellan, & Yates, 1997; Zaff, Moore, Papillo, & Williams, 2003). Of particular relevance to the present study is research which highlights the links between the quality of young people's volunteer and community participation experiences. In short, good experiences early on set the stage for a lifetime of civic engagement (Bobek, 2007; Wray-Lake, Flanagan, & Osgood, 2010; Youniss & Levine, 2009).

Not all service learning, community engagement and youth development programmes lead to positive outcomes (see for example T. D. Wilson, 2011 for a review). In general, young people gain more from programmes when they align with their values (Stukas, Hoye, Nicholson, Brown, & Aisbett, 2016), give them a chance to learn skills and feel effective in a supportive environment (Hayhurst et al., 2015) make positive change (Billig, 2000; but also see Kahne, Chi & Middaugh, 2006), build a sense of connection (Scarf, Moradi, et al., 2016), work with caring adults (Flanagan & Stout, 2010; Pancer, 2015) and create good feelings or positive affect (Blythe & Harré, 2012). In terms of civic engagement, programme emphasis on membership, rights, responsibility, social relations, opportunities for practice, and civic values modelled by adults and institutions encourage positive outcomes (Flanagan, 2004; Flanagan & Faison, 2001).

Many researchers in the civic engagement and youth development fields have highlighted the need for a more rigorous evaluation of youth development and civic participation programmes (Pancer, 2015; Sherrod, Torney-Purta, & Flanagan, 2010; J. Wilson, 2012). In particular, there has been a call to strengthen and evaluate promising civic engagement programming and determine which aspects of programmes contribute to civic outcomes (Finlay et al., 2010). Likewise, there is limited research on emerging adult civic

engagement and civic engagement programming. While there is some evidence that service-learning in tertiary settings can be beneficial for volunteers (Astin, Vogelgesang, Ikeda, & Yee, 2000; Eyler & Giles Jr, 1999; Patton, Renn, Guido, & Quaye, 2016), there is a dearth of research on other forms of civic engagement. Indeed, in a recent review of civic education programmes, the authors found that most research on civic activities outside of the classroom was correlational, cross-sectional, and had ‘no effects’ or small effect sizes (Geboers, Geijsel, Admiraal, & ten Dam, 2013). Understanding and evaluating programmes that foster civic engagement in young people is invaluable considering the currently low levels of participation.

## **Summary**

In light of the importance of civic engagement to healthy democracies and communities and as we live in a pivotal time of unprecedented challenges, the importance of understanding and increasing civic engagement in young people cannot be understated. Previous research has supported the claim that interventions can encourage positive youth development (e.g., Hayhurst et al., 2015; R. M. Lerner, 2004) and certain dimensions of civic engagement (e.g., group involvement, Pancer, 2015), but research has rarely explored the potential for an intervention to increase civic engagement in young people empirically. I conducted three studies in an effort to test whether it is possible to increase civic engagement and thereby potentially contribute to the reversal in the tide of youth disengagement. Because theories purport that well-being, generosity, civic identity and belonging are linked to dimensions of civic engagement, but no research has empirically linked these factors to civic outcomes, I also examined the role that these psychosocial factors play in civic outcomes and the processes by which these changes occurred.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

The present thesis aimed to address these gaps in the literature and civic disengagement through three studies. Study 1 explored the potential for young changemaker events (i.e., ReGeneration events that support people who want to make positive change) to increase (a) civic intentions, and (b) civic values. Study 2 explored the potential for a prosocial recall and writing task to influence: (a) civic values, (b) happiness, and (c) future prosocial behaviour. Study 3 explored the potential for acute belonging feedback to influence civic values.

## Chapter 2: Increasing Civic Intentions and Civic Values through ReGeneration Events

### Study 1a: Increasing Civic Intentions

#### Introduction

Study 1 of the present thesis explores the potential for young changemaker events to increase civic engagement. The changemaker events - run by the youth network ReGeneration - focus on supporting young people to create positive social and environmental change in their communities, nationally, and globally. Study 1 addresses several important gaps in the literature that need attention if we hope to encourage widespread youth civic engagement. In particular, there is a dearth of research exploring: 1) the potential for civic engagement to be increased; 2) both community and political engagement outcomes together; 3) both adolescent and emerging adults combined; 4) promising civic engagement-focused programmes.

**ReGeneration.** An Aotearoa New Zealand based network of changemakers (i.e., people who make or hope to make positive change) provides an exciting opportunity to explore the potential for increasing civic engagement in young people. ReGeneration is a group of “dedicated New Zealanders working to create positive change in their communities, workplaces, families, schools and the natural environment” (Evans & Matheson, 2011). One way that ReGeneration supports young people is through events held in every region of Aotearoa New Zealand. ReGeneration events focus on issues that are important to participants such as climate change and global poverty, as well as skills that are useful in enabling solutions such as leadership, communication and creative storytelling (Hayhurst, 2014). Through these events, ReGeneration hopes to connect “people to people, people to

## Increasing Civic Engagement

place, and people to purpose” (Evans & Matheson, 2011). In this way, ReGeneration aims to build relationships and support structures that last beyond the events (Evans, 2016b).

Roberts and Bolstad (2010) attended an early ReGeneration event in 2009 in order to understand the personal stories of ReGeneration participants and the learning and change processes that took place during the event. They described ReGeneration ‘09 as a series of workshops, discussions, shared meals and social activities that provided collaborative, experiential, and bicultural learning opportunities. In this way, ReGeneration supported participants through civic project concept development towards action planning (the models and culture ReGeneration fostered in the present study will be discussed further in the methods section).

ReGeneration events create a positive space for learning about community and environmental issues that are important to young people (Roberts & Bolstad, 2010; Hayhurst, 2014). ReGeneration also offers a timely opportunity to explore the potential to increase civic engagement and encourage young people to make positive and political contributions to their communities and society. Study 1 is comprised of two parts. Study 1a examines the potential for a series of ReGeneration events held in every region of Aotearoa New Zealand to increase civic intentions, that is, expectations to engage in community and political issues. Study 1b examines the potential for a larger, national ReGeneration event to increase participants’ sense of civic values – i.e. values concerned with helping others and improving one’s community and society.

**Civic intentions.** In the present thesis, civic engagement is defined as a broad concept encompassing the values and behaviours that lead to prosocial contributions to community and society. Since young people are excluded from several civic activities (such as voting), one way to measure their civic engagement is by asking about their intentions to engage in

community and political activities. Although civic intentions are a proxy for civic behaviours, research has shown that young people who voice greater commitment to civic and political engagement are more engaged as adults than young people who have lower levels of commitment (Fishbein & Ajzen, 2011; Oesterle, Johnson, & Mortimer, 2004; Theiss-Morse, 1993).

**Aims and hypothesis.** The present study explores the potential for ReGeneration-run changemaker events to increase civic intentions in young people. Thus there is one hypothesis, namely that ReGeneration participants will experience increases in civic intentions compared to controls (i.e., participants who did not take part in the ReGeneration events).

### Study 1a Methods

**Participants.** Two hundred and 75 (113 males) people took part in this study (*M* age: 18.5 years, range: 16-30 years). The experimental group consisted of 178 young people who participated in two-day residential ReGeneration events<sup>2</sup>. ReGeneration participants (58 males, *M* age: 18.3) were self-identified young changemakers (i.e., people who make or hope to make positive change). The control group consisted of 97 (55 males, *M* age: 18.9) young people who participated in two-day filmmaking workshops. Both programmes ran in every region of Aotearoa New Zealand, and both groups were recruited through schools, youth programmes and word of mouth. There was no compensation offered for participation.

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<sup>2</sup> Please note that while 178 people took part in the ReGeneration events, only 129 completed both T1 and T2 questionnaires. This is because of the nature of the events some participants arrived late (after the T1 questionnaires were completed) and some left early (i.e., were picked up by parents before T2 questionnaires were completed). No participants dropped out of the events, therefore no differences were expected between people who completed both, or only one questionnaire.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

***ReGeneration events.*** ReGeneration is a network of young people who want to create positive social and environmental change in their communities, nationally and internationally (Hayhurst, 2014). One way that young people are supported to make positive change is through two-day young changemaker events. There is no formal advertising for the events - people heard about them from friends, teachers and youth workers. Many of the ReGeneration facilitators had ties to secondary schools or youth programmes, in particular through the organisation Enviroschools, which supports sustainability endeavours in primary and secondary schools throughout Aotearoa New Zealand.

The ReGeneration events were called “Jams” because “like an improvised musical jam session the result is a spontaneous combination of all the participant's skills, knowledge and energy. The concept is youth teaching youth, and while we do have facilitators, youth workers and invited speakers, we are part of the Jam” (Evans & Matheson, 2011). For this reason, no two events were the same. Indeed, the organic and fluid nature of the events was one of the few consistencies, as facilitators responded to the unique knowledge, skills and projects people brought to each event. Other consistencies include a strengths-based, positive and youth-focused approach, and diverse, interdisciplinary engagement with topics.

In their report on the learning environment of an early ReGeneration event, Roberts and Bolstad (2010) described the importance of the collaborative construction of ideas (rather than people being told what to think), multimodal, experiential and interdisciplinary learning (rather than text-based), a strengths-based (rather than a competitive or problem-based) approach, and an emphasis on biculturalism. They concluded that the ReGeneration event “provided a foundation of learning from which the participants might be able to act more consciously, collaboratively and effectively in the future” (p.26).



The general format of the events was a collection of workshops bookended by large group discussions and reflection. Each event started with a pōwhiri (i.e., a customary Māori welcoming ceremony), followed by icebreakers (i.e., games designed to help people get to know each other and encourage teamwork) and the first questionnaires. ReGeneration uses the tuakana-teina model to structure the relationships between young people and facilitators. This Māori model roughly translates to big sibling/little sibling, and implies that we can all be tuakana (big sibling) and teina (little sibling) at any given time, as these roles are interchangeable and fluid. The facilitators were not necessarily older than the participants, but had been to events before and could pass on the culture of ReGeneration to newer participants, and therefore were often considered tuakana. However, if a new ReGeneration participant was running a workshop they would be considered a tuakana during that period, despite being a teina at other points of the event. Likewise the event organisers and older participants would be teina when participating in workshops. In this way everyone's voices and knowledge were heard and respected.

There were roughly four types of programming (with considerable fluidity between these types): 1) workshops; 2) brief presentations; 3) skill development; and 4) community cafés. Many of the workshops were similar across events, as tuakana who regularly attended events and had particular areas of interest they wanted to discuss. Topics included global poverty, sustainability, current environmental issues, and working with authorities (e.g., schools, local councils or government). A portion of these were run by newer participants, and therefore varied between events, covering topics such as river clean-ups, kapa haka (Māori performance art and dance), being a first-year tertiary student, project planning, and recycling projects. Brief presentations were eight minutes long, done by both tuakana and teina, covered a variety of topics such as organising drug and alcohol-free dance parties, building electric bikes, school vegetable gardens, and so on. Event organisers described the

## Increasing Civic Engagement

short presentations as an effective way to learn more about changemakers and their projects, especially from young people who did not feel comfortable running full workshops (Evans, 2011). Skills development workshops focused on skills that are useful for making positive change, such as creative storytelling, fundraising or pitching ideas. Finally, community cafés were small group brainstorming sessions sometimes focused on ideas participants wanted to explore further (e.g., community building) and were sometimes focused on projects participants wanted help developing.

Alongside workshops, there were hands-on activities such as tree planting, waste audits or bush walks. Events ended with group discussions about what people had learned, and what they planned to do with their new knowledge and networks once they returned home. Participants completed their second questionnaire just prior to leaving the event.

***Filmmaking workshops.*** The filmmaking workshops were run by a young filmmaker with a keen interest in engaging young people in storytelling and film. Workshops were two days long and run in every region of Aotearoa New Zealand. The aim of the workshops was to support young filmmakers and create a community of young people who wanted to make positive change. The workshops covered topics such as the basics of storytelling and film production (e.g., shooting, character development, editing). Participants were encouraged to create their own film after the workshop and enter it in a national competition. Workshops were advertised through schools and by word of mouth.

**Materials and procedure.** Questionnaires for the ReGeneration and Filmmaking groups were created with significant input from the organisers, and designed with brevity and programme outcomes in mind<sup>3</sup>. Both groups completed two civic intention scales, one at the

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<sup>3</sup> The author also attended most of the ReGeneration events and some of the Filmmaking events to ensure that measures continued to align with the programme facilitation and intended outcomes.

start of their event (hereafter referred to as T1) and one at the end of their events (hereafter referred to as T2). Demographic questions (age, sex and socioeconomic status) were also included in the T1 questionnaires.

***Civic intentions.*** Civic intentions were measured using five<sup>4</sup> items taken from the CIRCLE (Centre for Information and Research on Civic Learning and Engagement) expectations for engagement in electoral politics and expectations for engagement in community issues scales (Flanagan, Syvertsen, & Stout, 2007). The scale included questions such as, “When you think of the next few years, how likely are you to vote on a regular basis?” and, “When you think of the next few years, how likely are you to do volunteer work to help needy people?” Answers were scored on a 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely) Likert scale. In keeping with the findings reported by Flanagan et al., (who reported alphas of .74 and .80) the scale was found to be reliable both internally and over time amongst the current sample (Cronbach’s alpha,  $\alpha = .74$ ,  $n = 275$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .65$ ).

***Socioeconomic status.*** Socioeconomic status (SES) was measured by father’s (or male guardian’s) and mother’s (or female guardian’s) occupation. Occupation was coded on the 100-point income scale provided by the New Zealand Standard Classification of Occupations (Hancock, 2005, 2015). The NZSCO categorises New Zealand occupations based on guidelines from the International Labour Office, in order to compare the distribution of occupational groups and to determine average wages. Asking for parent occupation is standard practice across adolescent research as young people are more likely to respond, and respond accurately, than when questioned directly about parental income (Entwisle &

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<sup>4</sup> One of the items from the original CIRCLE political engagement scale (i.e., When you think of the next few years, how likely are you to volunteer for a political party?) was removed because it reduced the overall reliability of the scale and had less face value to youth in a New Zealand context.

### Increasing Civic Engagement

Astone, 1994). If two parents were in paid employment the higher score was used in the analysis.

## Study 1a Results

**Demographics.** A series of Pearson's correlations were conducted to assess the relationship between civic intentions at T1 with age and SES. As Table 1.1 shows, T1 civic intention scores had a small, positive relationship with age, but no relationship with SES.

Table 1.1

*Correlations between T1 Civic Intentions, Age and SES*

	<i>n</i>	<i>r</i>
Age	179	.31***
SES	111	.09

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

In order to assess potential differences in civic intentions at T1 between the young men and young women, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. No differences were found,  $t(177) = -.39, p = .70$ , see Table 1.2 for means.

In order to assess differences in civic intentions at T1 between the ReGeneration and filmmaking groups, an independent samples *t*-test was conducted. Participants in the ReGeneration group had significantly higher T1 civic intentions than did those in filmmaking groups,  $t(177) = 4.27, p < .001$ , see Table 1.2 for means.

Table 1.2

*Civic Intentions Means for Men and Women, and ReGeneration and Filmmaking Groups at T1*

		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>
Sex	Male	64	13.08 (4.42)	-.39
	Female	115	13.32 (3.80)	
Group	ReGeneration	145	13.83 (3.60)	4.27***
	Filmmaking	34	10.71 (4.74)	

Note. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

**Main findings: Civic intentions.** In order to investigate differences between groups further, the data was explored in terms of parametric assumptions. Assumptions of normality were met, however the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and independence between ReGeneration and the filmmaking groups were not met (Field, 2013). Therefore, a hierarchical multiple regression was conducted to assess whether participation in the ReGeneration events as opposed to the Filmmaking events influenced levels of civic intentions at T2, controlling for initial levels of civic intentions (T1) and age<sup>5</sup>.

Table 1.3 shows the unstandardised regression coefficients (*B*) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the *R*,  $R^2$ ,  $R^2$  change and *F* change at Step 1 (age and T1 civic intentions entered into the prediction equation) and Step 2 (with group – ReGeneration vs. filmmaking - also entered into the prediction equation) of the hierarchical regression.

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<sup>5</sup> Regression assumptions were met (sample size, multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity; Field, 2013; Pallant, 2003).

Table 1.3

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Intentions at T2*

Variable	B	SE B	$\beta$	t	R	R <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	F Change
<u>Step 1</u>					.65	.43	.43	58.44***
Age	-.08	.07	-.08	-1.25				
T1 Intentions	.63	.06	.67	10.60***				
<u>Step 2</u>					.68	.46	.04	10.79**
Age	-.04	.07	-.04	-.63				
T1 Intentions	.56	.06	.60	9.10***				
Group	1.63	.50	.21	3.28**				

Note. T1 Intentions = civic intentions. \*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that the overall model at Step 1 was significant,  $F(2, 157) = 58.44, p < .001$ . Age and T1 civic intentions accounted for 43% (adjusted  $R^2 = .42$ ) of the variation in T2 civic intentions. Inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for T1 civic intentions,  $\beta = .67, p < .001$ . Age did not significantly contribute to the model,  $\beta = -.08, p = .21$ .

The overall model at Step 2 was significant,  $F(3, 156) = 44.98, p < .001$ . Age, T1 civic intentions and group accounted for 46% (adjusted  $R^2 = .46$ ) of the variation in T2 civic intentions. Group explained an additional 4% of the variance in T2 civic intentions, after controlling for T1 civic intentions and age,  $R^2$  change = .04,  $F$  change (1, 156) = 10.78,  $p < .001$ . In the final model, inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for T1 civic intentions,  $\beta = +.60, p < .001$ , and group,  $\beta = +.21, p < .01$ . Age did not contribute significantly to the model,  $\beta = -.04, p = .53$ .

In order to explore the influence of time on group (ReGeneration and filmmaking), paired samples t-tests compared T1 civic intentions to T2 civic intentions scores for each group separately (see Table 1.4).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Table 1.4

*Mean Civic Intentions Scores for ReGeneration and Filmmaking Group across Time (T1,T2)*

	n	T1	T2	t
ReGeneration	129	13.80 (3.66)	14.99 (3.35)	-4.34***
Filmmaking	97	10.52 (4.75)	11.23 (3.93)	-0.95

*Note.* \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

ReGeneration participants experienced a significant increase in civic intention scores between T1 and T2,  $t(129) = -4.34, p < .001$ . The filmmaking participants experienced no such changes  $t(31) = -.95, p = .35$ .

**Study 1a Discussion**

The hypothesis of the present study was that participating in a two-day ReGeneration event would increase civic intentions, while participating in a two-day filmmaking workshop would not influence civic intentions. The results supported this hypothesis. ReGeneration participants experienced significant increases in civic intentions from the first to last day of the events. No effect emerged for the filmmaking workshop participants.

The ReGeneration and filmmaking groups were both comprised of self-selected participants with a keen interest in the topic of the event. The close matching of the two groups in terms of selection, programme design, programme aims, age and geographical representation were strengths of the present study. Likewise, the participants were representative of Aotearoa New Zealand youths in terms of geography, and comprised a broad range of socioeconomic status backgrounds.

Although the findings are encouraging, the present design contains a number of methodological weaknesses. Firstly, the ReGeneration group was not random, but self-identified young changemakers. Secondly, although civic intentions increased over the course



of the programme we failed to examine any of the psychosocial processes that may have contributed to this. Potential contributors such as ethnic group, well-being, and interpersonal generosity have been identified as important correlates of civic engagement (Flanagan, Cumsille, et al., 2007; Hayhurst, 2014; Sherrod, Torney-Purta, et al., 2010; Zaff et al., 2010) although their roles in predicting increases in youth civic engagement vary between countries and groups within countries (Flanagan, 2013; Foster-Bey, 2008; Xu, 2010) and are not well understood.

A final limitation is the nature of the dependent variable - civic intentions. It is uncertain from the size of the changes in civic intentions experienced by the ReGeneration groups is sufficient to change actual civic behaviour. Furthermore, Zaff and colleagues (Bobek, 2007; Zaff et al., 2010; Zaff et al., 2011) argue that while voting and volunteering are important parts of civic engagement, in order to have a truly successful democracy and the social and personal benefits that result, people also need civic values, i.e., they need to care about helping others and contributing to communities and society. Civic values have been linked not just to civic behaviours (Blais & Achen, 2010), but also to positive youth development (R. M. Lerner, Dowling, & Anderson, 2003) and well-being (Rossi, 2001). For this reason, Study 1b focuses not just on the behavioural components of civic engagement but also on what motivates civic behaviours – civic values (Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, et al., 2016).

**Study 1b: Increasing Civic Values****Introduction**

Results from Study 1a revealed that taking part in changemaker events increased young people's intentions to engage in community and political acts such as volunteering and voting. However, there were several methodological limitations associated with the study. Perhaps the most notable of these relates to the fact that civic intentions do not necessarily equal civic engagement. In order for communities and democracies to flourish, young people must also feel a sense of duty or responsibility towards others. Civic engagement means more than just the act of voting – it means that people believe that their lives and goals are tied to the lives and goals of others (Flanagan & Christens, 2013).

Zaff and colleagues (2010) propose an integrated construct of civic engagement – active and engaged citizenship (AEC). One concept that is emphasised in this holistic model is civic duty or civic values - the personal values of helping people and improving one's community and society. And while other parts of the AEC model such as neighbourhood connection are beyond the potential scope of phenomena a ReGeneration event might influence<sup>6</sup>, encouraging a sense of responsibility towards others is central.

Likewise, the civic values may be what links prosociality and contribution to positive youth development. For example, there is mixed evidence from the community service literature as to whether volunteering leads to positive outcomes for young people (Celio, Durlak, & Dymnicki, 2011; Youniss & Yates, 1997). Fostering a sense of engagement and responsibility towards others may be the point of difference between successful and

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<sup>6</sup> The present study is based on a national event, which has participants from every region of New Zealand. Therefore increasing neighbourhood connection during the event is unlikely.

unsuccessful programmes in this regard. Exploring civic values in the context of ReGeneration may help elucidate Youniss and Yates' (1997) argument that civic identity links civic engagement to positive development.

In Study 1a, I examined increases in civic intentions over the course of young changemakers events. However, I didn't examine the psychosocial contributors of these increases. Thus, the second part of Study 1 aims to address this by exploring whether civic intentions, generosity and well-being are related to civic values.

**Contributors.** An extensive review of the literature regarding young people and civic engagement identified three psychosocial factors that make important contributions to the maintenance and perpetuation of civic values (Bobek, 2007): civic intentions, generosity and well-being. Civic intentions, as outlined above, are integral to functioning democracy and healthy communities, and include engaging in community service and voting. In adolescent populations, intentions are measured rather than behaviours because young people are often excluded from civic activities such as voting. Also, civic behaviours tend to be measured over the course of a year (e.g., How often have you helped a neighbour in the last 12 months? See Hayhurst, 2014), and the intervention explored in the present study cannot be expected to increase civic behaviours due to the short time frame. Study 1a identified that civic intentions could be increased through young changemaker events. Civic intentions may contribute to civic values as there is evidence that young people's values grow in response to their behaviours (Albarracin & Wyer Jr, 2000; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). This is one means by which mandatory service learning increases civic values – when young people volunteer they are more likely to value prosocial behaviours and identify with prosocial values (J. M. Conway, Amel, & Gerwien, 2009; Youniss & Yates).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

While aspects of helping such as volunteering (Stukas, Snyder, et al., 2016) and social responsibility (Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011) have been explored in the youth civic engagement literature, interpersonal generosity has not. Despite this, there is evidence to suggest that a sense of generosity towards others is not only an important “human universal” (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013) but also an important aspect of engaged citizenship (Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2009), as caring about others motivates prosocial behaviour (Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, et al., 2016). Therefore, the potential for interpersonal generosity to contribute civic values will be explored.

Finally, the positive youth development (PYD) literature has identified the bi-directional relationship between contribution and youth well-being. For example, the 5Cs model of PYD suggests that through Competence, Confidence, Connection, Character and Caring young people are able to more fully contribute to their families and community (R. M. Lerner et al., 2005; R. M. Lerner, von Eye, Lerner, & Lewin-Bizan, 2009). Other literatures have linked aspects of well-being to prosocial behaviour, such as happiness to generosity (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013), subjective well-being to prosocial spending (Dunn, Aknin & Norton, 2014) and self-esteem to volunteering (J. Wilson, 2012). The present study explores the potential of well-being to contribute to a different form of prosociality – civic values.

Civic values are what motivate people to care for others and contribute to their communities and society. In this way, the concept is closely aligned with civic duty, especially as civic duty is conceptualised in the youth citizenship literature (i.e., compared to adult-centric civic duties such as jury duty; see Bobek, 2007; Zaff et al., 2010). As the present thesis focuses on young people, civic duty and values will be used interchangeably.

Many theorists believe that civic values and duty motivate civic action (e.g., voting, demonstrating) despite personal cost, and are therefore powerful predictors of civic behaviours (Blais & Achen, 2010; Zaff et al., 2011). Nevertheless, there are several gaps in the literature in terms of civic values and young people. First, while the concept of civic duty has been explored in political theory as a part of citizenship (e.g., rights and responsibilities), it has only recently been incorporated into youth citizenship research. Second, while aspects of prosociality (e.g., volunteering) and their predictors have been explored in depth with youth, civic values and what contributes to them are not well understood. Third, while there is extant research on service learning (J. M. Conway et al., 2009) and civic education in schools (Torney-Purta et al., 2001), the potential for youth programmes to promote a sense of civic values has rarely been explored. Finally, there is a paucity of research on civic values in young people in Aotearoa New Zealand. While related concepts such as civic duty, civic identity and social responsibility (Sherrod, Torney-Purta, et al., 2010; Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, et al., 2016) enjoy a rich tradition of research in the United States, it is still unclear whether civic values are appropriate concepts to use with New Zealand youth. The Aotearoa New Zealand political and community landscape is unique - and uniquely influenced by Māori culture (Sibley & Liu, 2007, 2013) - which means volunteering, membership, household responsibilities, and public and private sectors overlap in interesting ways (Sanders, O'Brien, Tennant, Sokolowski, & Salamon, 2008).

**Summary.** Study 1a was an exploratory investigation into the potential for young changemaker events to increase participants' civic intentions. The results suggest that the ReGeneration events were effective in this regard. In order to gain a better understanding of civic engagement more broadly, the present study examines a different aspect of civic engagement – civic values. There are further differences between Studies 1a and 1b. First, whereas Study 1a examined two-day regional events that lasted for half a year, Study 1b

## Increasing Civic Engagement

examined a larger, national five-day event called ‘Summer Jam’ (hereafter referred to as the summer event). Second, since the summer event was longer, a new control group was examined that more closely matched the format. Therefore, a group of young surveying students taking part in a five-day residential field camp was the control group. Finally, in order to examine what contributes to civic outcomes three psychosocial factors were included in the surveys – civic intentions, generosity and well-being.

Study 1b therefore, explores the potential for a young changemaker event to increase young people’s civic values, and whether well-being, civic intentions and generosity contribute to changes participants may experience. There are two hypotheses:

- 1) Participants in the ReGeneration event will experience increases in civic values compared to controls; and
- 2) Civic intentions, well-being and generosity will influence subsequent civic values.

## Study 1b Methods

**Participants.** One hundred and sixteen (53 females) took part in the study. Mean age was 21.1 years (16-32), 61 identified with a minority ethnic group (Māori, Pasifika, Asian, or ‘Other’) and 49 with the majority ethnic group (Pākehā/ New Zealand European).

The experimental group consisted of 73 young people (25 males, 1 transgender person) taking part in a five-day residential ReGeneration event. Mean age was 22.7 years (16-32), and 52 identified with a minority ethnic group, while 21 identified with the majority ethnic group. Eighteen participants attended both a two-day event (Study 1a), and the present, five-day event. There were no differences in levels of civic values between repeat participants ( $M = 39.20$ ,  $SD = 6.29$ ,  $p = .39$ ) and new participants ( $M = 38.22$ ,  $SD = 5.99$ ,  $t(102) = -.58$ ,  $p = .56$ ). For this reason, first time and repeat ReGeneration participants were analysed together.

The control group consisted of 43 (six female) tertiary students taking part in a five-day residential surveying field course. Mean age was 19.5 years (18-26), and nine students identified with a minority ethnic group, while 33 identified with the majority ethnic group.

***ReGeneration Summer Jam.*** The ReGeneration Summer event was a five-day national event attended by young people from all over Aotearoa New Zealand. The event was an opportunity “to upskill, plan actions, have fun and consider the question - where to from here?” (Evans & Matheson, 2011). The format was the same as the two-day events in terms of workshops, presentations, skill development and hands-on activities. Like the two-day events, new members were encouraged to run workshops and give brief presentations. There was likewise a focus on strengths-based, collaborative learning, biculturalism, and small and large-group reflection. One notable difference is the incorporation of whānau (family) groups – six to eight people of diverse ages who met daily to discuss on learnings, projects and ideas.

***Surveying Field Camp.*** The five-day surveying field camp is run as a required component of the surveying degree at the University of Otago. The course covers concepts and theories relating to road design, and offers opportunities to experience real-world examples of fieldwork and applied technology. The course coordinators emphasise the importance of hands-on learning, skills development and building friendships (Bazsika).

**Materials and procedure.** Both the experimental (ReGeneration) and control (surveying camp) groups completed two questionnaires; one at the start of their event (T1) and one at the end of their event (T2). The T1 questionnaires consisted of the demographic questions (age, sex, SES, and ethnic group) and the civic duty scale (Zaff et al., 2010).

***Socioeconomic status.*** Socioeconomic status was measured by father’s (or male guardian’s) and mother’s (or female guardian’s) occupation (as in Study 1a).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

***Ethnic group.*** Ethnic group was measured by asking participants to indicate which ethnic group(s) they identified with: Asian, Māori, Pākehā/ New Zealand European, Pasifika, or ‘Other’. People who identified as Pākehā/ New Zealand European were categorised as the majority group, and people who identified as Asian, Māori, Pasifika, ‘Other’ or with more than one ethnic group were categorised as a minority ethnic group. The present method of categorisation is far from perfect as Aotearoa New Zealand is a bicultural nation that recognises Māori as the tangata whenua (first people, people of the land). Also, there are likely considerable differences in cultural conceptualisations and relationships to civic engagement (Raihanian & Walker, 2007) between different minority ethnic groups. However, as substantial civic engagement research has highlighted different levels of participation between majority and minority ethnic groups (Flanagan, Cumsille, et al., 2007; Foster-Bey, 2008), and the small sample size of the present study, majority/minority was the most appropriate group distinction.

***Civic values.*** Civic values were measured using Zaff and colleagues’ (2010) civic duty scale, part of the Active Engaged Citizenship (AEC) measure. This scale has 12 items divided into three sections. The first section asks participants how much they agree or disagree with statements such as, “I believe I can make a difference in my community.” The second section asks participants how important statements such as, “Helping to reduce hunger and poverty in the world,” are to them. The final section asks participants how much they identify with statements such as, “When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them”. Participants responded on a 1 (strongly disagree/not important/not well) to 5 (strongly agree/very important/very well) Likert scale. In keeping with the findings reported by Zaff et al., (who reported alphas of .86 and .87) the scale was found to be reliable both internally and over time amongst the current sample (Cronbach’s alpha,  $\alpha = .87$ ,  $n = 116$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .87$ ).



Despite the acceptable alpha score, the ReGeneration coordinators (Evans, 2016b) identified issues with two of the civic duty scale items: 1) “I feel sorry for other people who don’t have what I have,” and 2) “When I see someone being treated unfairly, I don’t feel sorry for them” (reverse coded)<sup>7</sup>. The reliability analysis showed that these two items, along with a third item “It’s not really my problem if my neighbours are in trouble and need help” (reverse coded) reduced the reliability of the scale. When the three items were excluded from the analysis the new Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  was .90, with a test-retest reliability coefficient of .87. The civic duty scale will be explored further in the results section.

Participants completed the last (T2) questionnaire at the end of their events. The T2 questionnaires consisted of the same measure of civic values (assessed at T1). Also included were scales assessing civic intentions, generosity, and well-being.

***Civic intentions.*** Civic intentions were measured using the five-item, modified CIRCLE scale (Flanagan et al., 2007; as described in Study 1a above). Participants responded to questions such as, “When you think of the next few years, how likely are you to do volunteer work to help needy people?” Participants responded on a 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely) Likert scale. The scale was found to be reliable both internally (Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .80$ ) and over time (test-retest reliability coefficient = .80).

***Interpersonal generosity.*** Interpersonal generosity (hereafter referred to as generosity) was measured using Smith and Hill’s (2009) generosity scale. Participants responded to items such as, “(w)hen one of my loved ones needs my attention, I really try to slow down and give them the time and help they need”, and, “(m)y decisions are often based

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<sup>7</sup> The coordinator suggested that the use of the word ‘sorry’ implied pity, while ReGeneration participants were encouraged to empathise with people who were suffering instead (L. Evans, personal communication, May 11, 2014). Empathy is considered a more constructive tool than pity for creating positive change (see Hayhurst, 2010).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

on concern for the welfare of others.” Participants responded on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Likert scale. In keeping with the findings reported by Smith and Hill (who reported alphas of .87) the scale was found to be reliable both internally and over time amongst the current sample (Cronbach’s alpha, T1,  $\alpha = .82$ ,  $n = 116$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .81$ ).

***Well-being.*** Well-being was measured using (Keyes, 2009a) 14-item Mental Health Continuum Short Form (MHC-SF, see also Keyes, 2006). This scale is designed to measure three facets of well-being: emotional (e.g., “How often do you feel happy?”), social (e.g., “How often do you feel that you had something important to contribute to society?”), and psychological (e.g., “How often do you feel that you liked most parts of your personality?”). The scale has been validated internationally and with adolescents (Keyes, 2006) and university students (Robitschek & Keyes, 2009). Participants responded to questions such as, and, on a 1 (never) to 6 (every day) Likert scale, thus higher scores means higher well-being. In keeping with the findings reported by Keyes, who reported alphas of .87 (emotional), .89 (psychological) and .82 (social), the overall scale was found to be reliable both internally and over time amongst the current sample (Cronbach’s alpha, T1,  $\alpha = .85$ ,  $n = 116$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .75$ ).

## Study 1b Results

**Civic values factor analysis.** In order to explore whether a civic values scale is an appropriate tool to use in an Aotearoa New Zealand context, and to address theoretical issues with Zaff et al.’s (2010) 12-item scale (i.e., the use of the term ‘feel sorry’ in a context when people were encouraged to empathise with rather than pity others), I carried out a factor analysis. The data were screened for univariate outliers with Winsorizing (replacing outliers with the next highest score that is not an outlier) applied to four cases (Field, 2013). The

minimum amount of data for factor analysis was satisfied, with a sample of 116, providing a ratio of 10 participants for each item.

An initial analysis was used to obtain eigenvalues for each factor of the data. Three factors had eigenvalues over Kaiser's criterion of 1 and in combination explained 64.5% of the variance. Correlations between items revealed that all items were correlated at least .3 with at least 1 of the other items. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy was .86, above the commonly recommended value of .5 (Field, 2013), and Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant,  $\chi^2(66) = 709.13, p < .001$ . The diagonals of the anti-image correlations matrix were all over .7. Finally, the communalities were all above .4 (see Community 1, Table 1.5) further confirming that each item shared some common variance with other items.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Table 1.5

*Factor Loadings and Communalities for 12 Items from the AEC Civic Duty Scale (N = 116)*

Item	Communality1	Communality2	Loading
I feel sorry for other people who don't have what I have.	.200	.091	.301
When I see someone being treated unfairly, I don't feel sorry for them. (R)	.281	.201	.432
It's not really my problem if my neighbours are in trouble and need help (R)	.297	.213	.438
Helping to reduce hunger and poverty in the world (is important to me).	.744	.416	.645
I believe I can make a difference in my community.	.752	.535	.728
I often think about doing things so that people in the future can have things better.	.717	.530	.732
It is important to me to contribute to my community and society.	.571	.571	.762
Helping to make sure all people are treated fairly (is important to me).	.580	.580	.763
Helping to make the world a better place to live in (is important to me).	.613	.582	.755
Helping other people (is important to me).	.794	.695	.772
Speaking up for equality.	.756	.600	.775
When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them.	.613	.602	.776

*Note.* (R) = reverse coded.

The scree plot was ambiguous and showed inflexions that would justify retaining either 1 or 2 factors. In order to simplify the analysis and explore whether a shorter civic duty scale would work better with the present sample, the 12 items were forced into one factor. The statistics (correlations, Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure and diagonals of the anti-image correlations matrix) were as above. The communalities were all above .4 (see Communality 2, Table 1.5) with the exception of three items, which were .2 or lower. The component matrix revealed that while the majority of items loaded onto the one factor model (with factor

loading values of .6 or above), three items were not as strongly linked to the factor, with values of .4 and below (e.g., factor loadings  $< .5$  are considered small (Rahn, 2013) see Table 1.5). For these reasons, the three items were removed from the scale in the following analyses. In order to distinguish from Zaff et al.'s (2010) original civic duty scale, the new nine-item scale will be referred to as a civic values scale.

**Demographics.** In order to explore the relationship between civic values at T1, age, and SES, two Pearson's correlations were computed (see Table 1.6).

Table 1.6

*Correlations between Civic Values at T1, Age and SES for all Participants*

	<i>n</i>	<i>p</i>
Age	104	.29**
SES	71	.04

Note. \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Table 1.6, age was positively correlated with civic values at T1, suggesting that older participants had higher levels of civic values. SES was not correlated with civic values at T1.

Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to assess the differences in civic values between three pairs of groups at T1; 1) young men versus women; 2) minority versus majority ethnic groups; and 3) ReGeneration versus surveying camp participants (see Table 1.7). The results revealed that young women had significantly higher civic values at T1 compared to young men,  $t(101) = -4.56, p < .001$ . Likewise, the participants who identified with a minority group had significantly higher civic values at T1 compared to participants who identified with the majority ethnic group,  $t(1, 101) = -3.83, p < .001$ .

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Table 1.7

*Civic Values at T1 Means for Men and Women, Minority and Majority Ethnicities, and ReGeneration and Surveying Groups*

		<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>
Sex	Male	54	35.98 (6.65)	-4.67***
	Female	49	40.36 (3.95)	
Ethnicity	Minority	57	40.37 (4.86)	-3.83***
	Majority	46	36.13 (6.36)	
Group	ReGeneration	67	41.45 (3.52)	9.69***
	Surveying	37	32.79 (5.59)	

Note. \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Finally, ReGeneration participants had significantly higher levels of civic values at T1 compared to surveying camp participants,  $t(102) = -9.69, p < .001$ . It is worth noting that the ReGeneration group had a much higher proportion of participants who were women or identified with a minority ethnic group compared to the surveying group, and therefore the differences in civic values between genders and ethnicities may be attributed to group (i.e., self-identified changemakers versus surveying students) rather than demographics.

In order to investigate differences between groups further, the data was explored in terms of parametric assumptions. Assumptions of normality were met, however the assumptions of homogeneity of variance and independence between ReGeneration and the surveying camp groups were not met (Field, 2013). Hierarchical multiple regression was used to assess whether participation in the ReGeneration events influenced levels of civic values at T2, controlling for initial levels of civic intentions (T1), age, sex and ethnic group<sup>8</sup>.

Table 1.8 shows the unstandardised regression coefficients (B) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the  $R$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^2$  change and  $F$  change at Step 1 (age, sex,

<sup>8</sup> Regression assumptions were tested (assumptions of sample size, multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity) and no violations were found (Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013).

ethnic group and T1 civic values entered into the prediction equation) and Step 2 (with Group - ReGeneration versus surveying camp - also entered into the prediction equation) of the hierarchical regression.

Table 1.8

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T2*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i>	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F Change</i>
<u>Step 1</u>					.89	.79	.79	81.41***
T1 Values	.85	.06	.80	13.62***				
Age	.04	.08	.03	.47				
Sex	-.19	.70	-.02	-.28				
Ethnicity	-2.13	.70	-.17	-3.04**				
<u>Step 2</u>					.90	.81	.02	10.84**
T1 Values	.73	.07	.69	10.49***				
Age	-.03	.08	-.02	-.35				
Sex	.42	.69	.03	.60				
Ethnicity	-1.30	.71	-.10	-1.83				
Group	3.19	.97	.24	3.29**				

*Note.* Group = ReGeneration or Surveying; Values = civic values, Ethnicity = ethnic group, \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that the overall model at Step 1 was significant,  $F(4, 87) = 81.41, p < .001$ . Together, age, sex, ethnic group and T1 civic values accounted for 78.9% (adjusted  $R^2 = .79$ ) of the variation in civic values at T2. Inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = +.80, p < .001$  and ethnic group,  $\beta = -.17, p < .01$ . Age,  $\beta = +.03, p = .64$ , and sex,  $\beta = -.02, p = .78$ , did not contribute significantly to the model.

The overall model at Step 2 was significant,  $F(5, 86) = 74.66, p < .001$ . Together, age, sex, ethnic group, T1 civic values and group accounted for 81.3% (adjusted  $R^2 = .81$ ) of the variation in T2 civic values. Group explained an additional 2% of the variance in T2 civic

### Increasing Civic Engagement

values, after controlling for T1 civic values, age, sex and ethnic group,  $R^2$  change = .02,  $F$  change (1, 86) = 10.83,  $p < .01$ . In the final model, inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = +.68$ ,  $p < .001$ , and group,  $\beta = +.24$ ,  $p < .01$ . Age,  $\beta = -.02$ ,  $p = .73$ , sex,  $\beta = +.03$ ,  $p = .55$ , and ethnic group  $\beta = -.10$ ,  $p = .07$ , did not contribute significantly to the model.

Table 1.9

*Mean Levels of Civic Values for ReGeneration and Surveying Camp Participants across Time (T1, T2)*

	<i>n</i>	T1	T2	<i>t</i>
ReGeneration	67	41.53 (3.42)	42.40 (3.06)	-2.25*
Surveying Camp	37	33.07 (5.64)	32.77 (5.92)	.58

*Note.* \*  $p < .05$ .

Paired sample *t*-tests were conducted separately for ReGeneration and surveying camp groups to assess whether either group experienced any changes in civic values over time. After apply the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons, results revealed that ReGeneration experienced significant increases in civic values between T1 and T2. The surveying camp group experienced no such changes (see Table 1.9).

**Psychosocial contributors of civic values at T2.** Pearson correlations were conducted to explore the relationships between civic values at T2 and demographic variables for the ReGeneration participants. Findings revealed that for the ReGeneration group, civic values at T2 were not correlated with age ( $r = -.07$ ,  $p = .68$ ) or SES ( $r = -.18$ ,  $p = .31$ ).

Independent samples *t*-tests were conducted to assess the differences in civic values at T2 between: 1) young men and women; and 2) minority and majority ethnicities, for the ReGeneration group. There were no differences in mean scores of civic values at T2 between young men ( $M = 42.39$ ,  $SD = 2.97$ ) and young women ( $M = 42.43$ ,  $SD = 3.01$ ,  $t(65) = -.05$ ,  $p$



= .96). Likewise, no differences were found between participants who identified with a minority ethnic group ( $M = 42.71$ ,  $SD = 2.86$ ) and participants who identified with the majority ethnic group ( $M = 41.75$ ,  $SD = 3.13$ ,  $t(1, 66) = -1.23$ ,  $p = .23$ ). Therefore, these demographic variables were not included in the following hierarchical regression exploring psychosocial contributors of civic values outcomes for ReGeneration participants.

Pearson correlations revealed that civic values at T2 were positively correlated with civic intentions, well-being, and generosity at T2 for the ReGeneration participants (see Table 1.10).

Table 1.10

*Correlations between Civic Values at T2 and Key Contributors for ReGeneration Participants*

	T2 Values	T1 Values	Intentions	Generosity
T1 Values	.56 <sup>***</sup>			
T2 Intentions	.44 <sup>***</sup>	.38 <sup>**</sup>		
T2 Generosity	.43 <sup>***</sup>	.28 <sup>*</sup>	.23 <sup>#</sup>	
T2 Well-being	.40 <sup>***</sup>	.31 <sup>*</sup>	.40 <sup>**</sup>	.30

*Note.* T1 Values = T2 Values = T2 civic values, T1 civic values, Intentions = civic intentions. <sup>#</sup>  $p < .06$ , <sup>\*</sup>  $p < .05$ , <sup>\*\*</sup>  $p < .01$ , <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < .001$ .

In order to examine whether the civic intentions, generosity, and well-being at T2 contributed to civic values at T2, controlling for civic values at T1, a hierarchical regression was conducted. Civic values T1 was entered at Step 1 of the regression, while civic intentions, generosity and well-being were entered at Step 2 (see Table 1.11)<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>9</sup> Regression assumptions were tested (assumptions of sample size, multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity) and no violations were found (Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Table 1.11

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T2*

Variable	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F Change</i>
<u>Step 1</u>					.56	.31	.31	27.02***
T1 values	.47	.09	.56	5.20***				
<u>Step 2</u>					.67	.45	.14	4.74**
T1 values	.32	.09	.38	3.45**				
T2 Intentions	.24	.15	.19	1.66				
T2 Generosity	.15	.07	.24	2.22*				
T2 Well-being	.06	.05	.14	1.24				

*Note.* Values = civic values, Intentions = civic intentions. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that the overall model at Step 1 was significant,  $F(1, 59) = 27.02, p < .001$ . Civic values at T1 accounted for 31% (adjusted  $R^2 = .30$ ) of the variation in civic values at T2. Inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = .56, p < .001$ .

The overall model at Step 2 was significant,  $F(4, 56) = 11.60, p < .001$ . Civic values at T1, and T2 civic intentions, generosity and well-being accounted for 45% (adjusted  $R^2 = .41$ ) of the variation in civic values at T2, explaining an extra 14% of the variance. Inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = .38, p < .01$ , and generosity,  $\beta = .24, p < .05$ . Civic intentions,  $\beta = .19, p = .10$ , and well-being,  $\beta = .14, p = .22$ , did not make significant contributions to the model. Thus, initial levels of civic values and generosity at the end of the events made unique contributions to civic values outcomes.

### **Study 1b Discussion**

Study 1b explored the potential for a five-day ReGeneration event to increase civic values and potential contributors to civic values outcomes. A secondary research question investigated was whether civic values was a useful concept amongst youth in the New Zealand context. I had two hypotheses: 1) ReGeneration participants would experience increases in civic values compared to controls, and 2) civic intentions, generosity and well-being would contribute to those increases.

There were three main findings. First, ReGeneration participants experienced increases in civic values, compared to controls. Second, initial levels of civic values, along with generosity at T2, made unique contributions to civic values outcomes. Finally, a factor analysis confirmed what theory and stakeholders had flagged concerning Zaff et al.'s (2010) civic duty scale – that three of the items reduced the reliability and validity of the scale. The resulting nine-item scale is better suited to the present context and groups of participants. In order to distinguish the new scale from the old, the new scale is referred to as the civic values scale. These three findings will be discussed in terms of past research, Study 1a, theoretical and practical implications, limitations and future research below in the Study 1 General Discussion.

### **Study 1 General Discussion**

Studies 1a and 1b explored the potential for young changemaker events to encourage two aspects of civic engagement – civic intentions and civic values. Taken together, Studies 1a and 1b had three hypotheses: 1) ReGeneration participants would experience increases in civic intentions, compared to controls; 2) ReGeneration participants would experience increases in civic values, compared to controls; and 3) civic intentions, generosity and well-

## Increasing Civic Engagement

being would contribute to civic values outcomes for ReGeneration participants. The results supported hypothesis one and two, and partially supported hypothesis three.

The findings from Studies 1a and 1b reveal that the ReGeneration participants experienced increases in civic intentions and civic values from the first to last day of their events, while the control groups (filmmaking and surveying camp participants) experienced no such changes. In Study 1a of the present study I found that people who took part in two-day events that supported young people to make positive change had higher civic intentions at the end of the events. However, intentions are only part of civic engagement. In order to gain a better understanding of civic engagement as a whole, in Study 1b I explored the impact of ReGeneration events in more depth and found that participants experienced increases in civic values as well. In Study 1b of the present study, a shorter version of Zaff et al's (2010) scale was used following a factor analysis that revealed that three items reduced the reliability and fit of the scale to the present context. Using the revised scale, I found that civic values at T1 and generosity at T2 made unique contributions to civic values at T2.

The present study found that generosity outcomes significantly and uniquely contributed to civic values outcomes for the ReGeneration participants, after controlling for initial levels of civic values, well-being and civic intentions. While prosocial values have been linked generally to citizenship in the past, there is little research on the relationship between generosity and civic values. Thus, this is the first study that has found evidence linking these constructs, meaning that caring about the welfare of close others contributes to caring about the welfare of a wider circle of others. Two lines of evidence from positive and social psychology support the notion of widening circles of care. First, Fredrickson's (1998, 2001) broaden-and-build model describes how positive emotions broaden people's awareness and encourage an upward spiral of beneficial outcomes such as eudaimonic well-being (well-being based on purpose and doing good) and physical health (see also Fredrickson et al.,

2013; Kok et al., 2013). Second, social identity research suggests that one way to reduce prejudice is by encouraging people to recategorise ingroups and outgroups into a larger, superordinate group (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2014). These two theories support the potential for, and positive benefits of, widening circles of care – a notion that deserves further attention in a civic engagement context.

The present findings that neither well-being nor civic intentions correlated with civic values once controlling for T1 civic values and T2 generosity were unexpected. Evidence from the PYD and civic engagement literatures suggest a strong link between well-being and citizenship – when young people are thriving they have more time, energy and capacity to contribute to their communities (R. M. Lerner et al., 2009; Pancer, 2015). However, the present study found that while well-being was correlated with civic values, the relation was not significant after controlling for T1 civic values and other contributors (civic intentions and generosity). There could be several reasons for this finding. First, ReGeneration participants had relatively high levels of well-being (Hayhurst, 2014), which may have created a ceiling effect and reduced the relation between well-being and civic values. Alternatively, although the present study used a scale that encompasses three aspects of well-being – emotional, social and psychological – it may be only specific parts of well-being that make unique contributions to civic values. For example, our past work has highlighted the importance of self-efficacy (Hayhurst et al., 2015), self-esteem (Kafka et al., 2012), resilience (Hayhurst, 2007), and belonging (Scarf, Hayhurst, et al., 2016; Scarf, Moradi, et al., 2016) in positive youth outcomes following interventions. Likewise, the work on generosity and contribution tends to use measures of subjective well-being (Dunn et al., 2008), life satisfaction (Helliwell & Putnam, 2005), or confidence (Lerner et al., 2005) rather than the three-part construct of well-being conceptualised by Keyes (2009a). Future research could

## Increasing Civic Engagement

explore different aspects of youth well-being in order to further elucidate the link to civic values and engagement.

The second surprising finding is that civic intentions at T2 was correlated to civic values at T2, but did not uniquely contribute to the outcome after controlling for initial levels of civic values and other contributions (well-being, generosity). There are several diverse theories on the relationship between values and behaviours. Research on values with adult populations suggests that values give coherence to personal identities and motivate behaviour (Hitlin, 2003; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). In contrast, Festinger's (1962) dissonance theory suggests that behaviours can influence values – as people are motivated to have their behaviours be consistent with their values, they tend to modify their values to match their behaviours (see also Cooper, 2007). Adolescence and emerging adulthood may provide special opportunities for behaviours to influence values as important identity development takes place during these stages (Arnett, 2014). For example, some mandatory service learning programmes in schools increase prosocial values, despite students not having a choice about participating (Celio et al., 2011; J. M. Conway et al., 2009), suggesting values change to match their behaviour. The present findings suggest that intentions are correlated with but do not uniquely contribute to civic values – future research should examine civic intentions and civic values across time in order to investigate the causal links between the two for young people.

Civic values were conceptualised in the present study as other-focused values, i.e., contributing to community, reducing hunger and poverty, ensuring people are treated fairly and equally, and helping to make the world a better place. The scale was modified from the (Zaff et al., 2010) AEC scale, with three items flagged as potential problems in the original 12-item scale, and removed after a factor analysis supported a stronger, shorter scale.

The revised nine-item civic values scale, therefore, differed from Zaff et al.'s (2010) original civic duty scale. Duty is often associated with actions required by law, whereas civic values are associated with feeling a sense of responsibility to be a productive member of society (Blais & Achen, 2010; McCollum, 2016). Thus, the revised civic values scale moves the focus away from a sense of obligation towards a sense of caring.

As two of the excluded items concerned feeling sorry for others, the findings suggest that the participants in the present study may have picked up on the difference between sympathy and empathy. Empathy is the affective foundation of caring for others and is associated with prosocial behaviour (Batson, Ahmad, & Stocks, 2004; Wray-Lake & Syvertsen, 2011). Alternatively, sympathy is linked to personal distress in reaction to their situation (Eisenberg, 2000), and is less likely to lead to prosocial acts<sup>10</sup>.

The revised scale may, therefore, measure a mature or developed prosocial understanding, and in this way is aligned with Wray-Lake and colleagues' (2016) recent work on social responsibility. Social responsibility reflects broader social rather than civic-focused values, and a concern for the welfare of others extending beyond personal benefits (Gallay, 2006). Wray-Lake and Syvertsen (2011) describe how social responsibility "implies feeling accountable for one's decisions and actions, reliable and dependable to others, and empowered to act on issues within one's control" (p.12). However, the distinctions between these concepts are still blurry, and future research should examine the different roles that sympathy, empathy, civic duty, values and social responsibility play in motivating youth civic engagement.

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<sup>10</sup> More recently, Eisenberg, VanSchyndel, and Spinrad (2016) included both sympathy and empathy under the umbrella term 'empathic concern' and suggest both motivate prosocial behaviour. However, the distinction between pity, or personal distress in response to others' pain, and the empathic foundations of caring as differently motivating prosocial acts remains true.

**Increasing civic engagement.** The ReGeneration events were unique. However, ReGeneration methods and culture can be applied in diverse contexts by groups hoping to encourage civic intentions and values, although it is not clear which aspects of the ReGeneration programme might be most important for subsequent outcomes. There are, however, a number of possibilities. First, the tuakana-teina (big sibling/little sibling) model emphasises youth voice and knowledge, and values intergenerational respect and learning. Second, the positive, strengths-based focus on serious local and global problems (poverty, climate change) is one way by which to engage young people in issues they are passionate about, without causing burnout or disenchantment. Research emphasises the importance of positive emotions in creative solutions and maintaining positive behaviours (Fredrickson, 2001; Harré, 2011). Third, time was built into the events for reflection within small groups and large groups. Reflection has been identified as predicting positive outcomes in terms of community service learning (Boud, Keogh, & Walker, 2013; Eyler, 2001) it may be integral to civic engagement outcomes as well. Finally, ReGeneration integrated respect for Māori as tangata whenua (people of the land) and bicultural learning as core principles of their events and culture. While there is a paucity of research on the influence of bicultural practice in civic engagement and youth development, the strong, positive outcomes following the ReGeneration events suggest this is a valuable avenue for future research.

A key implication of the present studies is the potential for ReGeneration and similar interventions to aid democratic principles and encourage political and community commitment and engagement. ReGeneration events increased young people's civic engagement in a short amount of time, and in this way supported the participants to be better prepared to face the unique challenges of their generation. Educators, politicians, and non-profit organisations could aim to support similar programmes, to increase civic values and



behaviours in their own communities, in order to benefit not just young participants, but society as a whole.

**Limitations and future research.** Despite the strengths of the present study, there are several limitations. First, the research was not longitudinal. Evidence from past youth programmes suggests that on the first day of such programmes young people may experience increases in anxiety, or decreases in self-esteem, due to concerns about making friends and what might happen over the course of the event (Marsh et al., 1986). Likewise, Marsh et al. have noted that immediately following youth programmes participants may experience ‘post-group euphoria’ that can disappear once they return to their usual environments (see also Hayhurst et al., 2015; Seligman et al., 1995). Although these effects are more likely to influence well-being, civic values and intentions may also fluctuate, especially following interventions. Likewise, as intentions may not match actual behaviours, future research should examine whether the ReGeneration participants did indeed volunteer or vote more than controls.

Second, the control group in Study 1b of the present study, although matched for length, residential and learning experience, had fewer young women and was predominantly Pākehā/New Zealand European. It may be that young women or people who identify with a minority ethnic group are more prone to experience civic engagement outcomes following interventions. Although demographic variables were controlled for, considering past research highlighting ethnic and sex differences in civic engagement (e.g., Sherrod, Torney-Purta et al., 2010), future research should attempt to match control groups on ethnicity and gender as well.

Third, as noted above, other well-being measures should be included in future research on youth civic engagement. The role of happiness and positive affect may be

## Increasing Civic Engagement

particularly important to civic engagement outcomes considering their links to other forms of positive and prosocial behaviour (Harré, 2011; Kok et al., 2013). For example, happiness has been linked to generosity through qualitative (Hayhurst, 2010), correlational (Aknin et al., 2013) and experimental (Dunn et al., 2008) research, suggesting this may be a valuable avenue for future civic engagement research.

A final limitation is implicit to the nature of quasi-experimental research. The aim of the present thesis is to explore ways by which to increase civic engagement. However, each ReGeneration event involved was different in terms of participants, content and format, and although a breadth of psychosocial variables were measured, it's still difficult to capture why ReGeneration participants experienced positive outcomes. In order to isolate the crucial causal features of community, programme-based research, future research should attempt to increase civic engagement experimentally. Alternatively, qualitative research could investigate participants' and facilitators' beliefs about what lead to the positive outcomes following the events (e.g. Roberts & Bolstad, 2010). A further limitation of quasi-experimental research is the potential for demand effects. As ReGeneration participants knew the researcher and organisers they may have felt pressure to indicate increases in intentions to contribute to their communities following the events. Considering the questionnaires were completed days apart it is unlikely participants would remember their T1 answers. Nevertheless, an experimental design would reduce the chance of this particular demand effect.

Along with the research suggested above (e.g., exploring diverse aspects of generosity and well-being experimentally, and measuring actual behavioural outcomes), the present findings inspire several avenues of future exploration. The majority of civic engagement research highlights the fact that not all young people have the same opportunities to participate, in particular people from low SES backgrounds and ethnic minorities tend to have

a lower civic duty (Sherrod et al., 2010; Youniss et al., 2002). We found no such differences. To the author's knowledge, the present study is the largest civic engagement study with both adolescent and emerging adult young people in Aotearoa New Zealand – however, the number is still not large or diverse enough to make generalisations about differences in civic engagement between ethnic groups. Future research should examine how different ethnic groups engage with community and politics in Aotearoa New Zealand, in order to see whether any groups are disadvantaged and deserve more support.

Although we controlled for key demographic predictors of civic engagement (age, sex, SES and ethnic group), there are other important predictors that were beyond the scope of this study. In particular, education level, school climate and parent participation are key correlates of civic engagement, although the mediating role between SES and these correlates is highly contested (McCollum, 2016). While the potential for interventions such as ReGeneration show considerable promise, it may be that the participants were already on a path towards high levels of participation. This suggests future research should explore the roles of education, school climate and parent participation as well, or work with participants who are normally engaged to investigate civic interventions outcomes.

**Conclusion.** Considerable evidence suggests that youth civic engagement is declining, with potential deleterious effects for society and democracy. The present study explores ways by which young changemaker events foster civic intentions and values in participants, and support young people to be able to face the critical and complex challenges of their generation. Results suggest that ReGeneration events can encourage civic values, and that generosity may be particularly important in this regard. In order to further elucidate the relationships between civic values in young people, experimental methods investigating ways to increase civic values in normally engaged young people (as opposed to self-selected changemakers), and using random assignment for intervention and control groups (Kahne &

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Sporte, 2008) would improve the generalisability of the findings. Likewise, it is important to further investigate whether generosity uniquely contributes to civic values in different contexts outside of young changemaker events. In sum, experimental methods examining the roles that generosity, civic identity and happiness play in encouraging civic values will be the focus of Study 2.

## Chapter 3: Happiness, Civic Values and Prosocial Behaviour

He taonga rongonui te aroha ki te tangata

*Goodwill towards others is a precious treasure*<sup>11</sup>

### Introduction

Study 1 of the present thesis explored the potential to increase civic engagement through ReGeneration events (i.e., programmes that supported young people in creating positive social and environmental change). The results suggested that people who attended the events experienced significant increases in civic intentions (Study 1a), and civic values (Study 1b), compared to controls. Civic values at T1 and generosity at T2 uniquely contribute to civic values outcomes for ReGeneration participants.

Despite methodological strengths including a national sample, relatively well-matched control groups (in terms of programmes), and being the first study to investigate increasing civic values through young changemaker events, there were also several limitations. First, the quasi-experimental nature of the study and the non-random assignment of participants to the respective treatment and control groups, meant that those attending the ReGeneration events were already highly engaged. Thus we can't generalise from the

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<sup>11</sup> Māori proverb, see Brougham et al. (2012).

findings. Second, the well-being measure incorporated, whilst designed to be holistic, did not make a unique contribution to civic values. Considering extant research linking well-being to contribution and prosocial behaviour (Dunn, Aknin, & Norton, 2008; Larson, 2000; R. M. Lerner et al., 2009) this unexpected finding deserves further attention. The present study aims to explore the link between well-being and civic engagement further by including measures of mood and happiness, which are more commonly used in prosocial behaviour research. Third, in Study 1 I measured civic intentions and civic values, not civic acts. While research suggests that self-reports of commitments to civic participation are reliable predictors of actual behaviours (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Oesterle et al., 2004), civic intentions and values measures don't allow one to identify the behaviours that follow from these outcomes (Kahne & Spote, 2008). Finally, although the ReGeneration events were short (e.g., two and five days) in comparison to other positive youth development programmes (e.g., Outward Bound is 22 days long; see Neill & Dias, 2001; the Spirit of New Zealand voyages are 10 days long; see Hayhurst et al., 2015) it is still logistically and financially impractical for large numbers of New Zealand youth to attend such events. Shorter interventions may better address civic disengagement, as they can be more easily incorporated into current education and youth development contexts.

The present study aims to remedy the shortcomings of Study 1, further investigate the role that generosity plays in civic values, explore whether a brief intervention can lead to increases in civic engagement, and elucidate ways to encourage both civic values and behaviour experimentally. Participants were divided into four groups and asked to write about different recent or prosocial experiences in the hopes of fostering happiness, highlighting their prosocial identities, and encouraging civic values and behaviour. Participants were then given an opportunity to spend surprise earnings (i.e., a \$10 windfall) on themselves or prosocially. In this way, I hoped to tease apart the different roles that

happiness, prosocial identity, and prosocial acts play in fostering civic values.

## Literature Review

An ongoing question in the study of morality and prosocial behaviour is why people act to serve and help others (Aquino & Reed, 2002). Fortunately, research suggests that people not only tend to behave generously towards each other, but often enjoy doing so (Aknin, Dunn, Sandstrom, & Norton, 2013, but see also Staub, 2013). Results from Study 1 support this notion by showing that civic engagement was correlated with well-being for all groups of participants (see also Hayhurst, 2014). Likewise, evidence derived from research based on volunteering (Thoits & Hewitt, 2001), random acts of kindness (Lyubomirsky, Sheldon, & Schkade, 2005), and generosity (Dunn et al., 2008) suggests that people benefit from doing good. We are only beginning to understand the mechanisms by which these benefits occur. Research suggests that prosocial identity (Aquino & Reed, 2002), past prosocial behaviour (Kanacri et al., 2014), and happiness (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013) may be particularly important in encouraging future prosocial behaviour. However, these lines of thinking have rarely been applied to encouraging civic engagement. The present study explores the potential for a brief intervention to increase civic values using frameworks from the prosocial identity, generosity and happiness literatures.

**Prosocial intentions and behaviour.** One limitation of Study 1 of the present thesis is that I didn't measure actual behaviours – only a sense of well-being, generosity, values and intentions. As described in Study 1, there is evidence that civic commitments effectively predict future civic behaviour (Ajzen & Fishbein, 1980; Oesterle et al., 2004). Conversely, other evidence suggests that people have little insight into their own motivations (Nisbett & Wilson, 1977). As Baumeister, Vohs, and Funder (2007) note, “people have not always done what they say they have done, will not always do what they say they will do, and often do not

even know the real causes of the things they do,” (p.397). Based on these claims, some researchers suggest that while self-reported civic intentions are a useful proxy, it is invaluable to also examine actual civic acts (A. K. Cohen & Chaffee, 2012).

That being said, research on helping and prosocial behaviour has used a variety of behavioural measures to investigate the causes and consequences of prosocial behaviour. For example, Grant and Dutton (2012) and Nelson and Norton (2005) measured donation and volunteering behaviours following prosocial primes. Aknin and colleagues (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013; Aknin, Dunn, et al., 2013; Aknin, Sandstrom, Dunn, & Norton, 2011) have used prosocial spending as an outcome measure investigating the impact of happiness on generosity. In order to investigate the links between civic values and civic acts, the present study borrows from Aknin et al.’s (2012) design by giving participants a chance to spend a surprise monetary windfall either prosocially or personally.

**Prosocial identity salience and prosocial behaviour.** For the purpose of the present study, civic identity is defined as the dimension of self-concept that focuses on political and prosocial contributions to community and society. As noted in Study One, civic identity is closely related to the concepts of prosocial and moral identity - the parts of the self-concept that focus on helping others (Grant, Molinsky, Margolis, Kamin, & Schiano, 2009) or are organised around moral traits (Aquino & Reed, 2002). It is often claimed that civic identity is important to on-going civic engagement (Crocetti, Jahromi, & Meeus, 2012; Youniss & Yates, 1997), but rarely (if ever) is this empirically tested. Nevertheless, evidence from the prosocial and moral identity literatures suggests that by highlighting people’s prosocial and moral self-concepts, people are more likely to behave prosocially.

There are two reasons why this may be true. First, Albarracin and Wyer Jr (2000) showed that past behaviour directly influences people’s attitudes, and therefore their

## Increasing Civic Engagement

behavioural intentions and future behaviour. Second, people's actions and reactions to situations differ in powerful ways as a function of what part of their identity is salient (Brewer & Gardner, 1996; Reed & Aquino, 2003). Further, while most people have and value prosocial and moral identities (Schwartz & Bardi, 2001), identity salience varies according to situational cues (Batson, 1998). For example, Nelson and Norton (2005) demonstrated that when students described the characteristics of a superhero (i.e., a model of prosociality) they reported greater intentions to volunteer and increased actual volunteering behaviour three months later.

Another way researchers have demonstrated people's desires to behave consistently is through participant reflection on personal experience. For example, Grant and Dutton (2012) found that people who recalled their own good deeds (benefactors) were more likely to donate to natural-disaster victims and volunteer for their university compared to people who reflected on others' good deeds (beneficiaries). They concluded that reflecting on giving experiences is a "powerful vehicle for motivating prosocial behaviour," (p. 1038) and increasing the salience of people's prosocial identity is the mechanism by which reflection leads to prosocial acts.

Along with prosocial identity salience, evidence suggests that prosocial acts encourage further prosociality. As noted in Study 1, young people who vote when they first become eligible are more likely to vote in future elections (Denny & Doyle, 2009; Plutzer, 2002). Likewise, young people who volunteer are more likely to continue volunteering into adulthood (J. Wilson, 2000; Youniss & Yates, 1997). The social and moral identity literatures suggest that prosocial behaviour may be perpetuated through motivations to act consistently with one's conception of self as moral (Aquino & Reed, 2002; P. Conway & Peetz, 2012; Reed & Aquino, 2003). This is one method by which techniques that perpetuate prosocial behaviours are hypothesised to work. For example, the 'foot-in-the-door' technique suggests



that once people comply with a small request, such as a donation, they are more likely to comply with larger, related requests (Cialdini & Goldstein, 2004; Freedman & Fraser, 1966).

In sum, these lines of research suggest that prosocial behaviour may be encouraged through (a) prosocial identity salience; (b) being motivated to behave consistently with their sense of prosocial selves; or (c) being motivated to behave consistently with their past behaviours. Research has yet to clarify which (if any) is the more powerful motivator, and instead tends to assume that all are relevant to encouraging prosocial behaviour. Therefore, all three (or none) of the above motivations could be applied to encouraging civic engagement.

**Moral licensing.** Not all evidence supports the idea that past prosocial behaviour encourages future prosocial behaviour. Research on moral licensing suggests that people who feel moral act less prosocially – past prosocial behaviour gives people license to behave badly without losing their prosocial identity (Merritt, Effron, & Monin, 2010; Sachdeva, Iliev, & Medin, 2009). Moral licensing has been reported in research on donations to charity (P. Conway & Peetz, 2012), job hiring (Monin & Miller, 2001), and dishonest behaviour (Blanken, van de Ven, & Zeelenberg, 2015), and has even suggested that people may look for opportunities to act prosocially if they know they need a pass for an upcoming unethical act (Merritt et al., 2010) – a concept Monin and Miller (2001) described as “moral credentials”. Moral credentials have been used to explain behaviour such as when people reference minority friends when making statements that may be perceived as prejudiced, e.g., “some of my best friends are...” (Thai, Hornsey, & Barlow, 2016). For example, when defending himself against accusations of Islamophobia, president-elect of the United States, Donald Trump, told reporters that he had “at least 20” Muslim friends, but was unable to name one (Lawler, 2016).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Conversely, some evidence suggests that recalling past immoral behaviour leads to more prosocial acts as people strive to regain their sense of morality (Jordan, Mullen, & Murnighan, 2011). Indeed, Jordan and colleagues (2011) argue that recalling past good behaviour fulfils people's moral identity, which allows them to "relax" and engage in fewer moral behaviours. They found that people who recalled past immoral acts had stronger prosocial intentions and were less likely to cheat than those who recalled past moral acts. Thus, conflicting evidence from the prosocial and moral licensing literatures highlight the need to further elucidate the conditions by which prosocial behaviour is encouraged rather than discouraged.

**Positive emotions, happiness, and prosocial behaviour.** There is ample evidence that happiness, positive emotions, and prosocial behaviour are strongly related, and some theorists suggest that one means by which prosocial behaviour is sustained is through happiness and positive emotions. This point is apparent in Fredrickson's (1998; 2001) broaden-and-build model, whereby initial increases in daily experiences of positive emotions over time lead to increases in mindfulness, purpose, social support, and health (Fredrickson, Cohn, Coffey, Pek, & Finkel, 2008). Recent research has highlighted the role that positive emotions may play in promoting and sustaining general positive behaviours. Cohn and Fredrickson (2010) for example have shown that early affective responses to interventions predict long-term behaviour change and benefits. Cohn and Fredrickson followed people who took part in loving kindness meditation training for 15 months. They found that participants who gained the most from the intervention longitudinally had experienced higher levels of positive emotions during the training. This study provides evidence not only for the effectiveness of positive psychology interventions, but the importance of positive emotions in facilitating long-term benefits of interventions.

New correlational and empirical evidence from Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al.

(2013) suggests positive emotions and happiness are likewise linked to prosocial behaviour, in particular, prosocial spending. They found that: (a) reports from 136 countries showed that higher happiness is associated with more prosocial spending; (b) recalling past prosocial spending increases happiness; and (c) people assigned to buy items for charity felt better than those assigned to buy items for themselves. An exciting implication of this research is the potential that deriving happiness from prosocial spending may be a psychological universal (see also Dunn & Norton, 2014; Dunn et al., 2008). However, prosocial spending is only one aspect of prosociality. In light of the importance of civic engagement to democracy, yet the recent decline of civic engagement, these lines of research beg the question of whether happiness could promote other prosocial behaviours such as civic engagement.

There is, likewise, anecdotal and empirical evidence that other forms of prosocial behaviour make people feel good. Batson and Shaw (1991) labelled the good feelings that follow prosocial acts “empathic joy”. Neuropsychological research has shown that reward pathways are activated in the brain when people decide to behave altruistically (Harbaugh, Mayr, & Burghart, 2007). Hayhurst (2010) found that secondary students thought that the main “perks” of behaving generously were the feel good factor and the sense of reward they gained from giving. As Baumeister and Bushman (2011) note, “Isn’t it great that natural selection selected human beings to be able to get pleasure from helping others?” (p. 273).

Alongside copious evidence suggesting that people do not always behave generously or prosocially (Staub, 2003, 2011), Dovidio, Piliavin, Schroeder, and Penner (2006) also noted in their review that “surprisingly, there is little direct evidence that helping others actually makes the helper feel good” (p. 240). Recent research suggests the evidence linking prosocial behaviour to well-being is mixed because several conditions need to be met in order for prosocial behaviour to lead to positive outcomes. For example, Aknin, Dunn, et al. (2013) suggest that prosocial behaviour is more likely to lead to happiness when the behaviour

## Increasing Civic Engagement

encourages prosocial connection. Likewise, Piliavin and Siegl (2007) demonstrated that people who are less socially integrated experience the largest gains in well-being from volunteering. Weinstein and Ryan (2010) propose that helping creates more benefits for helpers when their motivation is autonomous and, therefore, that basic self-determination needs are fulfilled (Gagné, 2003; Ryan & Deci, 2000). Finally, Youniss and Yates (1997) described how young people who volunteered in soup kitchens experienced agency, social relatedness, and increased political-moral understanding (see also Kahne & Sporte, 2008). Taken together, past research suggests that not all prosocial acts lead to positive outcomes, but may be more salutary when the acts fulfil basic human needs such as connection or autonomy.

**Evidence for a positive feedback loop.** Of particular relevance to the present study, Aknin et al. (2012) found evidence for a positive feedback loop between happiness and prosocial spending. Participants in Aknin et al.'s study recalled and wrote about a prosocial or personal spending experience, reported their happiness, and then chose whether to spend a surprise monetary windfall prosocially or personally. Their results indicated that those who recalled prosocial experiences were happier than those who recalled personal spending experiences. In turn, happier participants were more likely to choose to spend their windfall on someone else. The authors concluded that prosocial spending may be self-reinforcing when the initial experience is a happy one.

These exciting lines of research highlight the importance of happiness in promoting and sustaining prosocial behaviours. They also raise important empirical questions. Can brief interventions increase civic engagement? Does any type of prosocial reflection lead to happiness and future prosocial behaviour, or only prosocial spending recall? Could reflection on donating or volunteering experiences also create positive change? Does happiness need to be present in order to encourage prosocial behaviour, or can prosocial behaviour be

reinforced simply through prosocial identity reflection and salience? Does recall of good deeds always produce good feelings? Do highlighting civic values lead to actual civic behaviours such as charity donations? Study 2 aims to answer some of these important questions.

Study 1 found correlational evidence between well-being and civic values for all participants (experimental and control), and provided evidence to show that well-being and civic engagement may reinforce each other. However, since well-being was only measured at one time point I couldn't directly investigate whether there was a positive feedback loop between civic values and well-being. Evidence suggests that happiness (Aknin et al., 2012) and past behaviour (Albarracin & Wyer Jr, 2000) may be important to on-going prosociality. While prosocial behaviour is generally considered important to encourage, civic engagement may be especially important at this point in time considering recent disengagement, and the potential impact of disengagement on the health of democracy. Therefore, the present study will investigate the potential for a positive feedback loop between civic values, happiness and civic behaviours using Aknin et al.'s (2012) prosocial writing task intervention.

**The present study.** The present study examines whether a brief intervention can increase civic values and behaviour, and whether happiness, generosity, civic intentions, well-being or mood contributes to civic values and behaviour. Participants were randomly divided into four groups (two experimental and two control groups) and asked to write about different experiences for 10 minutes. People in the two experimental groups were asked to write about recent (a) volunteering, or (b) donation experiences. In an attempt to disentangle the roles of positive emotions and prosocial behaviour recall in encouraging future prosocial behaviour, the first control group were asked to write about recent positive events. In order to disentangle the role of reflection, positive emotions, and prosocial behaviour recall in promoting future prosocial behaviour, the second control group were asked to write about a

## Increasing Civic Engagement

recent event as objectively as possible, without discussing emotions or beliefs. Following the writing task, all participants were then given a surprise monetary windfall (\$10) and instructed to spend that windfall in whatever way would make them happiest. Civic values and happiness were measured at three time points: before the writing task (T1), after the writing task (T2), and after spending the windfall at the end of the day (T3). Well-being, mood, civic intentions and generosity were measured at two time points: after the writing task (T2), and after spending the windfall at the end of the day (T3). There are four hypotheses:

- 1) Participants in the donation and volunteering writing task conditions will have higher civic values and happiness compared to baseline, and compared to controls (objective and positive event writing task conditions);
- 2) Participants in the volunteering and donation writing task conditions will be more likely to choose to spend their windfall prosocially (either donate it to charity or spend it on someone else) compared to controls;
- 3) Participants who chose to spend their windfall prosocially will have higher civic values and happiness compared to participants who spent their windfall on themselves; and
- 4) Happiness will contribute to increases in civic values.

## Study 2 Methods

**Participants.** One hundred and twenty-four people (36 males) took part in this study. Age ranged from 17 to 31 (*M* age: 20.6). Seventy-seven (62%) identified as the majority ethnic group (Pākeha/NZ European) and 47 (38%) identified with a minority ethnic group (Māori, Pasifika, Asian or ‘Other’). All participants were University of Otago students; 88 were recruited through a student job search website and paid the minimum wage for participation, and 44 were psychology students who received course credit for writing a short

report detailing their participation. Preliminary analysis revealed no differences between participants who were paid or participants who received course credit in terms of initial levels of civic values or happiness. Paid participants were significantly older ( $M = 21.0$ ,  $SD = 2.49$ ) than the course credit participants ( $M = 19.8$ ,  $SD = 2.81$ ,  $t(122) = -2.46$ ,  $p < .05$ ).

**Materials and procedure.** The present experiment had five steps: 1) On the first participants completed Time 1 (T1, baseline) civic values and happiness questionnaires; 2) On the second they completed a writing task; 3) On the third they completed Time 2 (T2) well-being and civic engagement questionnaires; 4) On the fourth they received and were given the opportunity to spend a \$10 windfall; and 5) On the fifth they completed the Time 3 (T3, i.e., at 5pm on the same day) well-being and civic engagement questionnaires. The details of each of these steps will be explained in turn below.

The first part of the experiment took place in a computer lab. Participants were told that the aim of the study was to design a life experiences questionnaire, and that they would be asked to write short stories about different life experiences and fill out a series of general psychology questions. Participants signed the consent form and completed the first (T1) civic values and happiness scales online.

**Civic values.** The civic values scale was modified in Study 1 from Zaff et al.'s (2010) AEC civic duty scale. The measure has nine items, and asks participants questions such as, "I believe I can make a difference in my community." Participants responded on a 1 (strongly disagree/not important/not well) to 5 (strongly agree/very important/very well) Likert scale. Study 1 supported the reliability of the civic values scale, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .87$ , as did the present study, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .82$ , with a test-retest reliability coefficient = .81.

**Happiness.** Happiness was measured using Lyubomirsky and Lepper's (1999) four-item Subjective Happiness Scale (SHS). Participants are instructed to respond on a 1 – 7

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Likert scale which statement is most appropriate in describing them. For example, “In general, I consider myself: 1 (not a very happy person) to 7 (a very happy person)”. In keeping with the findings reported by Lyubomirsky and Lepper (who reported an alpha of .79) the scale was found to be reliable both internally and over time amongst the current sample (Cronbach’s alpha,  $\alpha = .85$ ,  $n = 124$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .78$ ).

**Writing task.** Following the completion of the first questionnaire, participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. In each condition participants were required to complete a writing task, and given a response sheet with the task instructions and topic. There were four writing task conditions: 1) volunteering experience, 2) donation experience, 3) objective event, and 4) positive event.

The donation and volunteering writing task groups were the experimental conditions, and were designed to engage participants with different aspects of their prosocial identities. Aknin et al. (2012) showed that prosocial spending recall predicted future prosocial spending. However, whether any prosocial behaviour recall will encourage future prosocial behaviour - i.e., whether recall only encourages specific or general prosocial behaviour - is still unclear. Since the present study is concerned with encouraging civic engagement more broadly, two forms of prosocial behaviour were investigated: (a) donations (which has been shown to increase prosocial spending but has not been investigated in terms of civic values), and (b) volunteering (which has not been investigated in terms of prosocial spending or civic values).

The objective event task was the first control condition. As positive emotions are linked to happiness and generosity, the purpose of the objective event task was to have participants write as objectively as possible about any recent event, without engaging with any positive emotions or memories. The positive event task was the second control condition. As positive emotions have been shown to lead to prosociality (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et



al., 2013; Isen, 2001), the purpose of this condition was to distinguish whether positive emotions in general will lead to prosocial acts, or whether the positive emotions need to be associated with prosocial acts specifically in order to encourage future prosociality.

The writing task instructions were modelled on those used by Strack, Schwarz, and Gschneidinger (1985) and Aknin et al., (2012; see Appendix J). Participants wrote about their topics using a pen and paper for 10 full minutes. The volunteering, donation and positive experience writing task instructions were identical except for their introductory sentences. For the volunteering experience writing task participants were instructed to, “Please write in detail about a time when you volunteered (gave your time to people or organisations without being paid). For this task, try to let yourself go and write continuously for 10 minutes about your emotions and thoughts, without worrying about spelling or grammar. Describe what you did, why you did it, how you felt, and if anyone else was involved.”

For the donation experience writing task participants were instructed to, “Please write in detail about a time that you gave money to a charity or person who needed it...” For the positive experience task, participants were instructed to, “Please write in detail about a positive event or experience you had with another person or other people...”

For the objective experience task, participants were instructed to “Please write objectively and in detail about a recent event or experience. For this task, try to write continuously for 10 minutes, without worrying about spelling or grammar. Describe what you did and if anyone else was involved as dispassionately as you can . . . without mentioning your emotions, opinions, or beliefs.”

Following 10 minutes of writing, participants completed a full set of well-being and civic engagement scales (well-being, happiness, mood, civic values, civic intentions and generosity) online.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

**Well-being.** As in Study 1, well-being was measured using Keyes' (2009a) 14-item MHC-SF, which asks participants to respond to questions such as, "How often do you feel interested in life," on a 1 (never) to 6 (every day) Likert scale. Study 1 found an acceptable reliability of the well-being scale, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .85$ , and the present findings support the scales' reliability; the Cronbach's  $\alpha = .90$ ,  $n = 124$ , and the test-retest reliability coefficient = .72.

**Mood.** Mood was measured using Watson, Clark and Tellegen's (1988) 20-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). The scale was comprised of 10 negative affect items (e.g., angry, distressed) and 10 positive affect items (e.g., interested, proud). Participants were asked to respond to each emotion in terms of how they felt right now on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely) Likert scale. In keeping with the findings reported by Watson et al. (who reported alphas of .85 for the negative scale and .89 for the positive scale) the scale was found to be reliable both internally and over time amongst the current sample: Cronbach's alpha,  $\alpha = .85$  for the negative scale,  $n = 124$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .65$ ; Cronbach's alpha,  $\alpha = .87$  for the positive scale,  $n = 124$ , test-retest reliability  $r = .56$ .

**Civic intentions.** Civic intentions were measured using a modified version of Flanagan et al.'s (2007) expectations for engagement in community and political issues scale (see Study 1). Participants responded to questions such as, "When you think of the next few years, how likely are you to vote on a regular basis?" on a 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely) Likert scale. Study 1 found an acceptable reliability for the 5-item civic intentions scale, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .74$ , and the present findings support the scale's reliability;  $\alpha = .70$ ,  $n = 124$ , and test-retest reliability coefficient = .79.

**Generosity.** Generosity was measured using Smith and Hill's (2009) 10-item scale (see Study 1). Participants responded to items such as, "My decisions are often based on

concern for the welfare of others,” using a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Likert scale. Study 1 found an acceptable reliability for the generosity scale, Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .82$ , and the present findings supported the reliability of the scale: Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .86$ ,  $n = 124$ , and test-retest reliability coefficient = .72.

**Windfall.** Following the completion of the online questionnaires, participants were given an envelope that contained an instruction sheet and a \$10 windfall (i.e., 10 \$1 coins) in a clear plastic bag.

The instructions regarding the unexpected cash windfall stated that the experiment was exploring experiences that made people happy, they had been randomly selected to receive \$10 and to spend that money in whatever way would make them happiest. Then they were instructed to take the \$10 out of the bag and put it in their pocket (or in their bag if they didn’t have a pocket). Placing the windfall in their pocket was designed to encourage a sense of ownership over the \$10 before participants were asked to spend it. Participants were then instructed to think about ways to spend their windfall. Attached to the other side of the windfall instruction, participants found a slip of paper with several windfall spending suggestions. Options included spending it on themselves, on a friend, on a gift for a family member, or donating it to one of two local charities (the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust and Red Cross Refugee Support). The instructions suggested that if they wanted to donate some of their windfall they should indicate the amount and leave it in their envelope. To encourage anonymity, participants posted their envelopes in a box outside the computer lab on their way out. Thus it was explained to participants that, since all the envelopes were posted outside the computer lab, the experimenters didn’t have any contact with the envelopes and therefore couldn’t tell who kept the money and who donated it (see Appendix K).

At 5pm on the same day, participants were emailed a link to the third and final set of

## Increasing Civic Engagement

scales: well-being, happiness, mood, civic values, civic intentions, and generosity. Along with the well-being and civic engagement questions, the participants were asked to briefly describe how they spent their windfall.

## Study 2 Results

**Demographics.** Age was not correlated with T1 (baseline) civic values,  $r(124) = -.05$ ,  $p = .60$ , or T1 happiness,  $r(124) = .10$ ,  $p = .24$ . I used independent  $t$ -tests using the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons to explore the differences in baseline (T1) levels of civic values and happiness between (a) young men and young women; and (b) people who identified with a minority ethnic group (Māori, Pasifika, Asian or Other) versus people who identified with the majority ethnic group (Pākehā/ New Zealand European). No differences were found (see Table 2.1).

Table 2.1

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Civic Values and Happiness at T1 for Males and Females, Minority and Majority Ethnicities*

	Males	Females	Minority	Majority
Civic Values	36.50 (5.15)	38.73 (3.67)	38.00 (4.52)	38.09 (4.14)
Happiness	18.83 (4.32)	17.72 (5.26)	18.10 (4.93)	18.03 (5.10)

*Note.* Minority – people who identified with a minority ethnic group; Majority = people who identified with the majority ethnic group.

As there were no significant demographic differences, age, ethnic group and sex will not be included in the following analyses.

### Writing task, happiness and civic values.

**Happiness.** I used a 4 x 2 mixed model ANOVA in order to examine the impact of the

writing task on happiness<sup>12</sup>. The between groups factor was the writing task condition (objective event, positive event, volunteering experience, and donation experience). Time (T1, baseline; T2, post-writing task) was the within-subjects factor. Happiness means and standard deviations for the writing task condition across time are presented in Table 2.2 and depicted in Figure 2.1.

Table 2.2

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Happiness across T1 and T2 as a Function of Writing Task Condition*

	<i>n</i>	Happiness T1	Happiness T2
Objective Event	29	18.31 (5.54)	17.55 (5.77)
Positive Event	29	17.69 (5.20)	19.55 (5.04)
Volunteering	32	19.38 (3.92)	19.84 (4.04)
Donation	30	17.40 (5.07)	16.97 (5.33)
Total	120	18.14 (5.00)	18.41 (5.24)

The only effect to emerge was a significant interaction between writing task and time, Pillai's Trace = .09,  $F(3, 116) = 3.74$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .09$ . There was no main effect for time, Pillai's Trace = .01,  $F(1, 116) = .91$ ,  $p = .34$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .01$ . There was no main effect for condition,  $F(3, 116) = 1.47$ ,  $p = .23$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .03$ .

I conducted post hoc power analyses using GPower (Faul et al., 2007) to explore whether the present non-significant results were due to a lack of statistical power. Results suggested that the sample size was adequate, power  $(1 - \beta) = .81$ . It is therefore unlikely that

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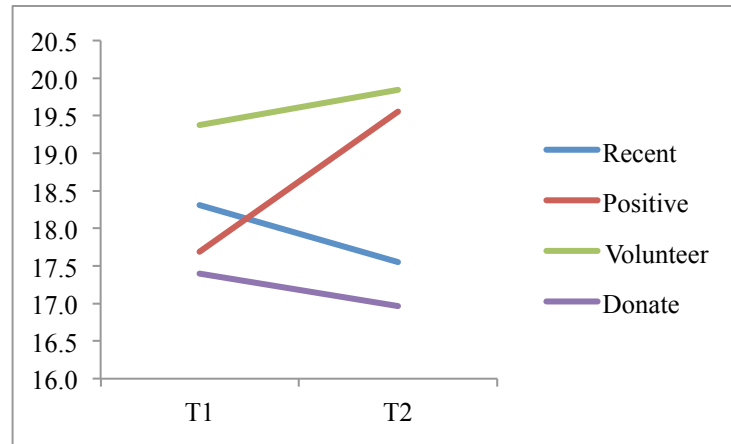
<sup>12</sup> Prior to conducting the ANOVA, the assumptions were tested, and the assumption of equality of covariance was violated. Sphericity and equality of error variance assumptions were satisfied. Therefore the Pillai's Trace statistic is reported (Field, 2013).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

the negative findings can be attributed to a limited sample size.

Figure 2.1

*Mean Happiness across Time (T1, T2) as a Function of Writing Task Condition*



In order to explore the interaction effect between time and condition further, four paired samples *t*-tests were conducted comparing T1 to T2 happiness for each writing task group separately. This analysis revealed a significant effect for the positive event writing task group; participants reported increases in happiness between T1 and T2,  $t(29) = 2.18, p = .04$ . This effect did not remain significant when using the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. No effects were found for the objective event ( $t(28) = 1.50, p = .14$ ), volunteering ( $t(31) = -1.79, p = .08$ ), or donation ( $t(29) = .66, p = .52$ ) writing task groups (see Table 2.2).

**Civic values.** In order to examine the influence of the writing task condition on civic values, I conducted a mixed 4 x 2 repeated measures ANOVA<sup>13</sup>. The between-subjects factor was the writing task condition (objective event, positive event, volunteering experience, and donation experience). Time (T1, baseline; T2, post-writing task) was the within-subjects factor. Civic values means and standard deviations for the writing task condition across time

<sup>13</sup> Prior to the ANOVA assumptions were tested with no violations found.

are presented in Table 1.14 and depicted in Figure 2.2.

Table 2.3

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Civic Values across T1 and T2 as a Function of Writing Task Condition*

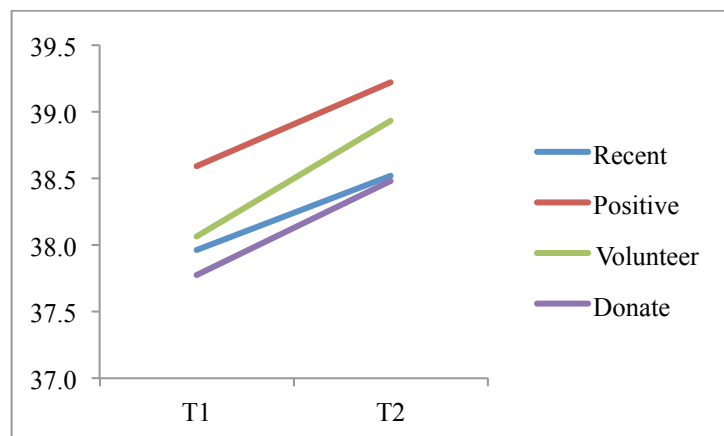
	<i>n</i>	Values T1	Values T2
Objective Event	27	37.96 (5.16)	38.52 (5.07)
Positive Event	27	38.59 (3.60)	39.22 (3.04)
Volunteering	31	38.07 (3.95)	38.94 (4.18)
Donation	31	37.77 (4.57)	38.48 (4.33)
Total	117	38.11 (4.30)	38.78 (4.19)**

Note. \*\* $p < .01$

There was a main effect for time, Wilks' Lambda = .93,  $F(1, 112) = 8.06$ ,  $p < .01$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .07$ . Overall mean T2 civic values were significantly higher than T1 civic values,  $t(116) = -2.78$ ,  $p < .01$ ; see Table 2.3). There were no other main (e.g., for writing task condition,  $F(3, 101) = .85$ ,  $p = .47$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .03$ ) or interaction effects (e.g., between writing task and time, Wilks' Lambda = .10,  $F(3, 112) = .08$ ,  $p = .97$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .001$ ).

Figure 2.2

*Mean Civic Values across Time (T1, T2) as a Function of Writing Task Condition*



## Increasing Civic Engagement

***Contributors of civic values at T2.*** I used Pearson's correlations to explore the relations between civic values, well-being and civic engagement variables at T2 (see Table 2.4).

Table 2.4

*Correlations between Civic Engagement and Well-being Variables at T2 for all Participants*

	1. T1 Values	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
2. T2Values	.81***						
3.T2 Intentions	.55***	.62***					
4.T2 Generosity	.38***	.50***	.48***				
5.T2 Well-being	.22*	.27**	.26**	.34***			
6.T2 Happiness	.25**	.26**	.26**	.28**	.57***		
7.T2 Positive	.09	.16	.09	.16	.26**	.22*	
8.T2 Negative	-.04	.02	-.03	-.11	-.47***	-.40***	.00

*Note.* 1. T1 = T1 civic values; 2. Values T2 = T2 civic values; 3. Intentions = T2 civic intentions; 4. Generosity = T2 generosity; 5. Well-being = T2 well-being; 6. Happiness = T2 Happiness; 7. Positive = T2 positive affect, 8. Negative = T2 negative affect. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Table 2.4, civic values at T2 were correlated with civic values and T1, and civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness at T2. These factors will therefore be used in the following hierarchical regression.<sup>14</sup>

In order to examine whether the civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness at T2 contributed to civic values at T2, controlling for civic values at T1, a hierarchical regression was conducted. Table 2.5 shows the unstandardised regression coefficients (B) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the  $R$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^2$  change and  $F$  change at Step 1 (civic values at T1 entered into the prediction equation) and Stage 2 (with civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness at T2 also entered into the prediction

<sup>14</sup> No violations were found when testing regression assumptions (sample size, multicollinearity, outliers, normality, linearity and homoscedasticity; Field, 2013; Pallant, 2013).



equation) of the hierarchical regression.

Table 2.5

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T2*

<i>Variable</i>	<i>B</i>	<i>SE B</i>	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>	$\Delta R^2$	<i>F Change</i>
<u>Step 1</u>					.81	.66	.66	208.45***
T1 Values	.79	.06	.81	14.44***				
<u>Step 2</u>					.85	.73	.07	6.10***
T1 Values	.63	.06	.65	10.30***				
T2 Intentions	.22	.07	.20	3.00**				
T2 Generosity	.10	.05	.14	2.29*				
T2 Well-being	.02	.03	.05	.72				
T2 Happiness	-.02	.05	-.02	-.31				

*Note.* Values = civic values; Intentions = civic intentions, \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The hierarchical multiple regression revealed that the overall model at Step 1 was significant,  $F(1, 107) = 208.45, p < .001$ . Civic values at T1 accounted for 66% (adjusted  $R^2 = .66$ ) of the variation in civic values at T2. Inspection of the beta weight revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = .79, p < .001$ .

The overall model at Step 2 was significant,  $F(5, 103) = 54.52, p < .001$ . Civic values at T1, civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness accounted for 73% (adjusted  $R^2 = .71$ ) of the variation in T2 civic values. Civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness at T2 explained an extra 7% of the variance in civic values at T2. Inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = .65, p < .001$ , T2 civic intentions,  $\beta = .20, p < .01$ , and T2 generosity,  $\beta = .14, p < .05$ . T2 well-being,  $\beta = .05, p = .48$ , and T2 happiness  $\beta = -.02, p = .76$ , did not make significant contributions to the model.

**Writing task and windfall spending decisions.**

***Windfall spending decision coding.*** Participants briefly described how they spent their windfall when they completed their final scales online at the end of the day (T3). Two independent coders coded each of the participants' answers into one of four response groups; 1) donation; 2) prosocial; 3) personal; or 4) mixed (personal and prosocial). Responses were coded as donation if they gave the entire windfall to the charities suggested in the windfall instructions, or if they donated to another charity (e.g., Women's Refuge). Responses were coded as prosocial if the participant spent their entire windfall on another person, such as buying a gift or a meal for a friend. An example of prosocial spending description was, "On a flatmate's panadol that she asked me to pick up for her as she is home sick." Responses were coded as personal if the participant spent their entire windfall on themselves. An example of a personal spending description was, "On a book and coffee." Responses were coded as mixed if the participant spent some of the windfall prosocially (either donation or on someone else) and some of the windfall on themselves. Examples of a mixed spending description are, "Donated half, spent rest on socks," and, "Lunch on me and a friend." The Kappa value for the two coders was .98.<sup>15</sup>

***Writing task and windfall spending.*** In order to assess whether the writing task influenced how people spent their windfall, I used a 4 x 4 chi-square test for independence. Windfall spending decisions were divided into four groups: donation (giving their entire windfall to charity), prosocial spending (spending their entire windfall on others), personal (spending their entire windfall on themselves) and mixed (donation, prosocial and mixed spending). The writing task had four groups; objective event, positive event, volunteering and

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<sup>15</sup> The two coders disagreed on two cases. The first coder thought that, "I gave it to a friend for petrol money," and, "On chocolate for the flatmates," were mixed spending decisions as the participant likely shared in the car trip and the chocolate, while the second coder thought they were prosocial spending decisions. The first coder's group selections were used in the analyses below, as both coders agreed the acts were more mixed than prosocial; however, there were no differences when the second coder's group selections were used instead.

donating. The numbers (and percentages) of people in each windfall spending condition as a function of writing task group are presented in Table 1.17.

Table 2.6

*Number of People in each Windfall Spending Group as a Function of Writing Task Group*

	Donate	Prosocial	Personal	Mix
Objective event	11 (39.3%)	8 (28.6%)	7 (25.0%)	2 (7.1%)
Positive event	13 (48.1%)	7 (24.1%)	5 (17.2%)	4 (14.8%)
Volunteer	15 (46.9%)	4 (12.5%)	6 (18.8%)	7 (21.9%)
Donate	17 (58.6%)	4 (13.8%)	3 (10.3%)	5 (17.2%)
Total	56 (47.5%)	23 (19.5%)	21 (17.2%)	18 (15.5%)

As can be seen in Table 2.6, the majority of all participants chose to donate their money, while there were relatively equal numbers who decided to spend their money on others, on themselves, or on a mix of prosocial and personal spending. However, the largest portion of people who decided to donate their money were those who wrote about donation experiences (58.6%) while those who wrote about objective experiences were the least likely to donate their money (39.3%). People who wrote about positive (44.8%) or volunteer (46.9%) experiences were equally likely to donate their money. Despite these distinctions, none of the differences between groups were statistically significant - the Chi-square test indicated no association between the writing task and how people spent their windfall, Fisher's exact test = 7.86,  $p = .55$ .

### **Windfall spending, happiness and civic values.**

**Happiness.** I conducted a mixed 4 x 3 ANOVA<sup>16</sup> to examine any changes in happiness participants may have experienced over the day. The between-groups factor was

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<sup>16</sup> Prior to the ANOVA, the assumptions were tested, and the assumption of equality of covariance and sphericity were violated. To compensate the Greenhouse-Geisser statistic is reported (Field, 2013).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

windfall spending group (donate, prosocial, personal or mixed). Time (T1, baseline, T2, post-writing task, and T3, post-windfall spending) was the within-subjects factor. Happiness was the dependent variable. Happiness means and standard deviations for each spending group across time are presented in Table 2.7 and depicted in Figure 2.3.

Table 2.7

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Happiness for each Windfall Spending Group across Time (T1, T2, T3)*

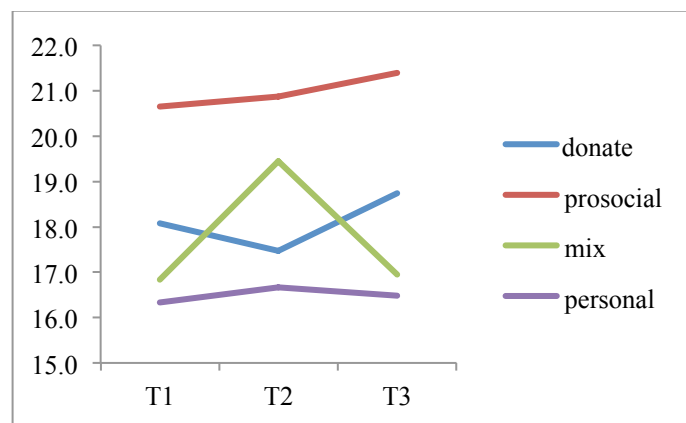
	<i>n</i>	T1	T2	T3
Donate	51	18.08 (5.03) *	17.47 (5.32) *	18.75 (4.97) *
Prosocial	23	20.65 (3.26)	20.87 (3.65)	21.39 (4.13)
Mixed	18	16.83 (5.76)	19.44 (5.59) *	16.94 (5.06) *
Personal	21	16.33 (4.59)	16.67 (5.36)	16.48 (5.11)
Total	113	18.08 (4.93)	18.32 (5.24)	18.58 (5.08)

*Note.* Significant increases between T1 and T3, and T2 and T3 for the donation group. Significant decreases between T2 and T3 for the mixed spending group, \*  $p < .05$ .

There was a main effect for the windfall spending group,  $F(3, 109) = 3.84, p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .10$ . This effect was qualified by an interaction between spending group and time, Greenhouse-Geisser = 113.87,  $F(5, 180) = 3.99, p < .01, \eta_p^2 = .10$ .

Figure 2.3

*Mean Happiness Scores across Time (T1, T2, T3) as a Function of Windfall Spending Group*



In order to explore the interaction between time and spending group further, a series of paired sample t-tests (T1 to T2, T2 to T3, and T1 to T3) were conducted for each windfall spending group separately. There were significant increases in happiness found between T1 and T3, and T2 and T3 for the group who donated their windfall ( $p < .05$ ). There were significant decrease in happiness between T2 and T3 for the mixed windfall spending group (i.e., the group who spent their windfall both prosocially and personally;  $p < .05$ ). None of these changes remained significant once applying the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons.

Finally, I compared each windfall spending group at each time point (T1, T2, and T3) using ANOVAs and Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons. Results revealed significant effects for each time point: T1,  $F(3, 114) = 3.95, p < .01$ ; T2,  $F(3, 113) = 3.46, p < .05$ ; and T3,  $F(3, 112) = 4.93, p < .01$ . Post-hoc tests revealed that people who spent their windfall prosocially (i.e., on others that they knew), had higher happiness scores than those who spent their windfall personally (i.e., on themselves) at T1 and T3 ( $ps < .05$ ). No other differences were significant once correcting for multiple comparisons.

**Civic values.** I conducted a mixed 4 x 3 ANOVA to examine any changes in civic values participants may have experienced over the day<sup>17</sup>. The between-groups factor was the windfall spending group (donate, prosocial, personal or mixed). Time (T1; baseline, T2, post-writing task, and T3, post-windfall spending) was the within-subjects factor. Civic values means and standard deviations for each spending group across time are presented in Table 2.8 and depicted in Figure 2.4.

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<sup>17</sup> Prior to the ANOVA, assumptions were tested, and the assumption of equality of covariance was violated. Sphericity and equality of error variance were satisfied. To compensate, the Pillai's Trace statistic is reported (Field, 2013).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Table 2.8

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Civic Values for Windfall Spending Groups across Time (T1, T2, T3)*

	<i>n</i>	T1	T2	T3
Donate	50	38.74 (4.01)	39.44 (3.61)	39.68 (3.47)
Prosocial	21	39.29 (3.84)	39.86 (3.41)	40.33 (3.57)
Mixed	17	36.71 (5.05)	37.35 (5.98)	37.12 (7.09)
Personal	20	37.45 (3.90)	38.25 (3.49)	37.80 (3.44)
Total**	108	38.29 (4.18) **	38.97 (4.05) **	39.06 (4.35) **

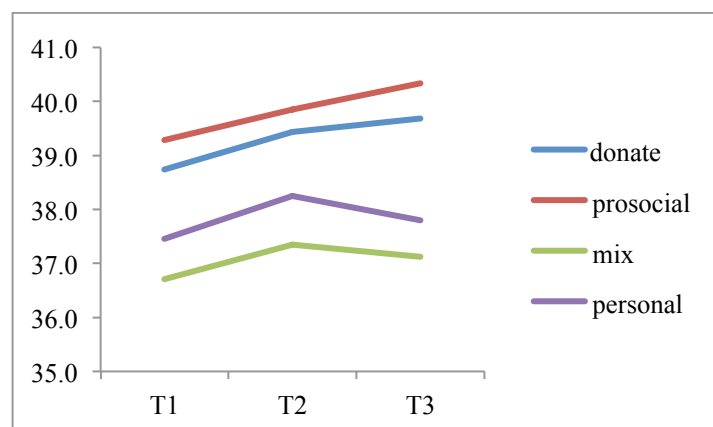
*Note.* \*\* Significant increases from T1-T2, and T1 to T3,  $p < .01$ .

There was a main effect for time, Pillai's Trace = .07,  $F(2, 103) = 3.82$ ,  $p < .05$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .07$ . There was no significant interaction between spending group and time, Pillai's Trace = .02,  $F(6, 208) = .32$ ,  $p = .92$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .01$ . There was no main effect for condition,  $F(3, 104) = 2.37$ ,  $p = .08$ ,  $\eta_p^2 = .06$ .

I conducted post hoc power analyses using GPower (Faul et al., 2007) to explore whether the present non-significant results were due to a lack of statistical power. Results suggested that the sample size was inadequate, power  $(1 - \beta) < .78$ . It is therefore possible that the non-significant findings can be attributed to a limited sample size (i.e., Type II error).

Figure 2.4

*Means of Civic Values as a Function of Windfall Spending Group across Time (T1, T2, T3)*



In order to investigate the effect for time further, I used three paired samples *t*-tests (using Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons), comparing civic values at T1 to T2, T2 to T3, and T1 to T3. Means and standard deviations for civic values across each time point for all groups are presented in Table 2.8 and depicted in Figure 2.4. Results revealed significant increases from T1 to T2,  $t(116) = -2.78, p < .01$ , and T1 to T3,  $t(110) = -3.09, p < .01$ . The difference between T2 and T3 was not significant,  $t(111) = -.36, p = .72$ . In overall terms, participants experienced increases in civic values from the start of the experiment (T1) to T2 following the writing task, and the increased civic values remained high at least until the end of the day (T3).

**Contributors of civic values at T3.** In order to explore the relationships between civic values, well-being and civic engagement variables at T3, I computed a series of Pearson's correlations (see Table 2.9).

Table 2.9

*Correlations between Civic Engagement and Well-being Variables at T3 for all Participants*

	1. T1 CV	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.
2.T3 Values	.81***						
3.T3 Intentions	.50***	.53***					
4.T3 Generosity	.46***	.50***	.44***				
5. T3 Well-being	.18	.29**	.34***	.35***			
6. T3 Happiness	.30**	.35***	.22*	.33***	.62***		
7. T3 Positive	.13	.20*	.14	.28**	.35***	.24**	
8. T3 Negative	-.12	-.24*	-.04	-.18	-.37***	-.44***	-.18

*Note.* 1. T1 = T1 civic values; 2. T3 Values = T3 civic values; 3. Intentions = T3 civic intentions; 4. Generosity = T3 generosity; 5. Well-being = T3 well-being; 6. Happiness = T3 Happiness; 7. Positive = T3 positive affect, 8. T3 negative affect. \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Table 2.9, many of the variables were correlated significantly with each other. Civic values at T3 were positively and significantly correlated to civic values at T1, and civic intentions, generosity, well-being, happiness, positive and negative affect at T3.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

In order to examine whether the civic intentions, generosity, happiness, positive and negative affect at T3 contributed to civic values at T3, controlling for civic values at T1, a hierarchical regression was conducted.

Table 2.10 shows the unstandardised regression coefficients ( $B$ ) and intercept, the standardised regression coefficients ( $\beta$ ), the  $R$ ,  $R^2$ ,  $R^2$  change and  $F$  change at Step 1 (civic values at T1 entered into the prediction equation) and Step 2 (with civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness at T2 also entered into the prediction equation) of the hierarchical regression.

Table 2.10

*Summary of Hierarchical Regression Analysis for Variables Contributing to Civic Values at T3*

Variable	$B$	$SE\ B$	$\beta$	$t$	$R$	$R^2$	$\Delta R^2$	$F\ Change$
<u>Step 1</u>					.81	.65	.65	195.28***
T1 Values	.81	.06	.81	13.97***				
<u>Step 2</u>					.84	.71	.06	3.07**
T1 Values	.67	.07	.67	9.81***				
T3 Intentions	.14	.07	.14	2.05*				
T3 Generosity	.06	.05	.08	1.21				
T3 Well-being	.01	.03	.03	.40				
T3 Happiness	.02	.06	.02	.25				
T3 Positive	.02	.03	.04	.72				
T3 Negative	-.10	.05	-.11	-1.75				

*Note.* Values = civic values; Intentions = civic intentions, Positive = positive affect; Negative = negative affect,

\*\*  $p < .01$ , \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

The results of the hierarchical multiple regression revealed that the overall model at Step 1 was significant,  $F(1, 105) = 195.28, p < .001$ . Civic values at T1 accounted for 65% (adjusted  $R^2 = .65$ ) of the variation in civic values at T3. Inspection of the beta weight revealed a significantly positive effect for civil values at T1,  $\beta = .81, p < .001$ .



The overall model at Step 2 was also significant,  $F(7, 99) = 33.84, p < .001$ . Civic values at T1, civic intentions, generosity, well-being, happiness, positive and negative affect accounted for 71% (adjusted  $R^2 = .68$ ) of the variation in T3 civic values, and explained an extra 6% of the variance in T3 civic values. Inspection of the beta weights revealed significantly positive effects for civic values at T1,  $\beta = .67, p < .001$  and civic intentions,  $\beta = .14, p < .05$ . Generosity,  $\beta = .08, p = .23$ , well-being,  $\beta = .03, p = .69$ , happiness  $\beta = .02, p = .81$ , positive affect,  $\beta = .05, p = .47$ , and negative affect,  $\beta = -.11, p = .08$ , did not make significant contributions to the model.

## Study 2 Discussion

The present study examined whether it was possible to promote happiness and civic values through a brief writing and reflection task. Participants were divided into four groups and asked to describe recent: (a) donating, (b) volunteering, (c) positive, or (d) objective events (i.e., described recent events without discussing emotions or beliefs). I predicted that people who recalled past volunteering or donation experiences would have higher levels of happiness and civic values, and be more likely to act prosocially, which in turn would lead to higher levels of happiness and civic values, compared to those in the positive or objective event groups. The findings did not support these hypotheses.

**Main findings.** First, I predicted that people in the volunteering and donating writing task conditions would experience increased happiness and civic values compared to the baseline and control groups. No such differences were found. However, there was a general trend across all groups to experience increases in civic values following the writing task - something about the writing task in general rather than the topics specifically influenced participants' civic values. This finding will be discussed further below.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Second, I predicted that people who wrote about donations and volunteering experiences would be more likely to spend their \$10 windfall on someone else or donate it. Instead, I found that almost half (48%) of participants chose to donate their entire windfall, and while the largest portion of the participants who did that had written about donating experiences, group differences were not significant. Therefore the topic of participants' writing tasks – donation, volunteering, positive or objective – did not influence how they spent their windfall.

Third, I found no differences in civic values as a function of how people chose to spend their windfall – people who spent their money prosocially or personally had the same levels of civic values at the end of the day. Since the windfall spending groups were self-selected there were insufficient participant numbers (especially in the mixed spending group) to ensure adequate power in the analyses. Thus, a larger sample size may have revealed differences in civic values as a function of windfall spending.

I did find significant differences between windfall spending groups in terms of happiness. People who spent their entire windfall on other people (but didn't donate) had higher levels of happiness overall (i.e., at the start and end of the study) compared to those who spent their money personally (i.e. on themselves). This finding suggests that people who are happier are more likely to spend their money on people they know than on themselves, and remain happy after doing so. In terms of happiness, there was a confusing pattern of results that were trending but not significant, including the findings that participants who spent their money both prosocially and personally (i.e., the mixed group) experiencing a spike in happiness following the writing task, which returned to relatively low levels after they spent their windfall. There were a small number of participants in each windfall spending group (with the exception of the donation group). More participants may have led to a clearer pattern of results in this regard.

Finally, happiness did not uniquely contribute to civic values following the writing task (T2), or at the end of the day after participants had spent their windfall (T3). Instead, initial levels of civic values (T1) uniquely contributed to civic values after the writing task (T2) and after the windfall spending (T3). Generosity and civic intentions at T2 correlated with post-writing task (T2) civic values, while civic intentions at T3 likewise correlated with civic values at T3. This is similar to the findings from Study 1b which showed that generosity uniquely contributed to civic values outcomes. Happiness, along with well-being and mood were correlated with, with civic values at T2 or at T3 but were not uniquely related once other within-time point variables were accounted for.

**Links to past research.** One of the goals of the present study was to link Aknin et al.'s (2012) promising findings regarding a positive feedback loop between happiness and prosocial spending to happiness and civic values. No such feedback loop was found. However, several methodological differences between the present study and Aknin et al.'s work may account for the divergent findings. For example, the present study's procedure included baseline measures of happiness and civic values, two experimental (volunteering and donation) and two control (positive and objective) writing task conditions, and follow-up measures of happiness and civic values. Through these methodological additions, I hoped to clarify the relationship between happiness, prosocial identity, civic values and prosocial behaviour. However, instead of extending the positive feedback loop premise, the present findings cast doubt over whether happiness and prosocial spending create a positive feedback loop, or whether they are simply consistently correlated across time.

In order to put the present findings in context, I will consider two of Aknin et al.'s additional findings: (a) there was no direct link between prosocial spending recall and future prosocial spending – happiness mediated the interaction; and (b) they concluded that “the happier participants felt after the memory exercise, the more likely they were to engage in

### Increasing Civic Engagement

prosocial spending when presented with a new windfall” (p. 251). As I was able to analyse happiness across three time points, the findings revealed that happier people chose to spend their money prosocially, and their happiness levels remained high throughout the day. Less happy people chose a range of spending options (donation, personal, or mix) and their happiness also stayed stable. Without the baseline measure (i.e. as in Aknin et al.’s experiment) the present findings would support the positive feedback loop premise, however as it stands it appears that happy people, no matter the recall task, are more likely to spend their windfall prosocially.

The windfall spending instructions in the present study included suggestions about giving to charities, which resulted in almost half of the participants donating their windfall. This finding is in line with much of the research on volunteering and donating that suggests the biggest predictor of volunteerism and donation behaviour is simply being asked (Pancer, 2015; Stukas, Hoyer, et al., 2016). Unlike the participants who spent their windfall on people they knew, the people who donated did not have higher levels of happiness compared to those who spent their windfall on themselves. Two major differences between prosocial spending and donation options in the present study are (a) connection and (b) autonomy. In terms of connection, Aknin, Dunn, et al. (2013) have shown that the “hedonic benefits of prosocial spending are most likely to emerge when the spending promotes positive social connection” (p.155). The donation experience in the present study offered no opportunities for connection, as the windfall was anonymously placed in a box outside the door. Future research could explore this caveat further by using techniques such as those used by Pavey, Greitemeyer, and Sparks (2011), who found that writing about connection experiences promoted prosocial intentions. Likewise, future research could explore the levels of connection people felt during their writing tasks (i.e., whether they were with others during the experience they were reflecting on) or when they spent their windfall to see if that had any influence on happiness

or civic values at the end of the day.

Along with connection, another key human need according to self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000) that may have been compromised when people chose to donate is autonomy. By asking people to donate they may have felt normative pressure, though every effort was made to encourage participants to spend the windfall in the way that would make them happiest, and to preserve their anonymity in their windfall spending decision. Future research could analyse how people felt about their donation experience, or find alternatives to donations in order to assess civic behaviour. For example, Grant and Dutton (2012), Nelson and Norton (2005), and Isen (2001) measured volunteering time and helping behaviour.

The present study did not find any evidence for the moral licensing effect (Jordan et al., 2011; Merritt et al., 2010). People who wrote about their prosocial behaviour were just as likely to spend their money prosocially as those who wrote about positive or objective events – past moral acts didn't make people more or less likely to behave morally in the future. In this way, our findings sit more in line with the majority of research on prosocial behaviour that suggests people strive to have their behaviours align with their prosocial identity and past behaviours (Festinger, 1962; Plutzer, 2002).

**The role of reflection in civic engagement.** As noted above, participants across the writing task and windfall spending groups experienced increases in civic values from the start to the end of the study, with the largest increase occurring after the writing task. This suggests that either the writing task itself or the opportunity to reflect - rather than the topic of reflection - increased civic values. Reflection was an important part of the ReGeneration events (see Study 1) and took place in small and large groups at several points throughout each event. Reflection has also been identified as an important tool for positive psychology interventions (Emmons & McCullough, 2003; Seligman et al., 2005) and service-learning

### Increasing Civic Engagement

programmes (Bringle & Hatcher, 1999; Eyler, 2001). Most research suggests that the topic (i.e., gratitude, learning) or length of reflection are important to the outcomes (Bolier et al., 2013; Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2009). The present findings suggest that a (relatively) short reflection period on diverse topics increased civic values. Future research on different reflection topics (e.g. anti-social behaviour, prejudice) may further elucidate whether reflecting on other topics, alongside recent and prosocial events, contribute to civic values. Importantly, a further control group - one that does not write at all - is needed to rule out whether it is the writing task or just the passage of time that increases civic values.

The finding that all groups experienced increases in civic values after the writing task also highlights the importance of the control groups and baseline measures. Whereas past research has compared two very different reflection experiences (e.g., benefactor and beneficiary, prosocial and personal spending), the present study included a range of reflection experiences. In this way, I was able to account for the effects derived from civic experiences (e.g., volunteering), prosocial spending experiences (e.g., donation), positive experiences and recent events described objectively. This was the first study to the author's knowledge that was able to compare the differences between reflecting on positive versus prosocial experiences that may also be positive. As there were no differences found between groups despite the range of reflections, and because these findings contradict research exploring similar phenomena, future research is clearly warranted.

**Prosocial and civic identity.** We predicted that reflecting on past prosocial acts would highlight participants' prosocial identities and encourage future prosocial behaviour. However, the findings revealed that participants whose prosocial identities were made salient (i.e., through writing about volunteering or donation experiences) did not have higher civic values and were not more likely to spend their windfall prosocially compared to controls. There are several methodological weaknesses that may account for these findings. First,

prosocial or civic identity may not have been salient for the experimental groups. People have diverse experiences of volunteering and donating – for this reason if a participant's experience was limited, the writing task would not have been very successful in highlighting their prosocial identity. Other methods of identity salience, such as word scrambles (Grant & Dutton, 2012) or repeated references to prosocial groups (Hunter et al., 2014) may be more effective.

Alternatively, perhaps everyone's civic identity was already salient because everyone completed the baseline civic values scale. However, the differences in civic values across time between experimental and control groups in Study 1 – all of whom completed the civic values scales, suggest this is not the case. It is important to note that past research has rarely investigated whether prosocial identity is made salient through reflection tasks, rather this is assumed. As pointed out in the introduction, other motivations working parallel to or instead of identity salience (such as matching future behaviours with past behaviours, or with one's sense of moral self) may have been at play. Thus, one limitation of the present study is that I failed to measure identity salience specifically, instead assuming the reflection task would highlight prosocial identity for participants who wrote about prosocial acts. These limitations may be resolved by developing better civic identity definitions and measures (e.g. Kafka, 2015), as currently prosocial, moral and civic identity measures inadequately capture the degree to which the commitment to help others is connected to the sense of self and identity (Hart, Atkins, & Ford, 1998). Therefore, future research should explore the participants' stories for identity content, include identity measures and distraction scales so that the baseline civic values scale is less salient.

**Why no joy, mate?** Interestingly, there were no main or interaction effects regarding increases in happiness throughout the study. This finding is surprising since (a)  $\frac{1}{4}$  of the participants spent 10 minutes reflecting on positive experiences; (b) everyone was given a

### Increasing Civic Engagement

surprise \$10 (and who doesn't like free money?); and (c) participants were also explicitly instructed to spend their windfall in whatever way would make them happiest. There are several possible explanations for the lack of changes in happiness between groups or across time. First, Dunn and Norton (2014) review considerable evidence that people lack insight into how to spend money in order to make themselves happy – the present findings add to that collection of evidence. Second, people may have been suspicious about receiving \$10 because free money is non-normative, which may have suspended the excitement of free money.

Third, the design of the study may discourage changes in happiness across conditions. For example, asking people if they wanted to donate money may have reduced their sense of autonomy, thereby obstructing basic need fulfilment (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Fourth, although Lyubomirsky and Lepper's (1999) SHS has been used to evaluate short-term changes in happiness in past studies (Lyubomirsky et al., 2005; Seligman et al., 2005), the wording of the scale (i.e., "Compared to most people, I am a very happy person") suggests a more stable psychological construct. Future research could use scales that are more sensitive to short-term changes.

Finally, reflecting on positive events for 10 minutes might not make people feel happy. Many positive psychology interventions suggest that greater effort or duration is needed for increases in happiness to be achieved (Sin & Lyubomirsky, 2009). However, extant research (Dunn & Norton, 2014) suggests that reflecting on generosity increases happiness, if only in the short term. Future research into the writing task and reflection conditions is needed, as the present findings suggest not all reflection on prosocial or positive experiences leads to happiness.



**Limitations and future research.** The future research suggested above included examining how a sense of connection and autonomy influence writing and donation experiences. Also, participants' stories could be analysed in terms of their connection, emotional, and prosocial identity content to see whether the writing task engaged participants as intended. In addition, measuring actual prosocial identity salience and including distraction scales in the questionnaires may help clarify whether all or any writing task groups experience identity salience.

Another limitation is that participants may have had marginal donation or volunteer experience; therefore, their stories may have lacked the identity, connection or emotional content needed to encourage civic values. Alternatively, if they had no volunteering or donation experience being asked to write about it may have caused anxiety or guilt. A potential solution would be to include a list of civic behaviours and ask participants to write about any that they had experience with. For example, Hayhurst (2014) asked young people about 10 different civic activities such as helping neighbours, volunteering at churches or places of worship, or being a leader, and most participants had done at least one of those activities in the last year.

Past research has shown that length of interventions - from meditating or reflection exercises - tend to have better outcomes when they have longer durations. For example, Eyler (2001) suggests that young people who focus on learning experiences during reflection rather than just emotional experiences, dramatically improve their learning following community service. Pennebaker's (1997) extensive body of research on the health benefits of writing following trauma often asks participants to write for 15 minute sessions over four days (see also Pennebaker & Smyth, 2016). Systematic examinations of the writing found that people who benefited the most had more self-reflective, positive, emotionally open and thoughtful content, including more causal insight words such as "realise" and "understand"

## Increasing Civic Engagement

(Niederhoffer & Pennebaker, 2009; see also Pennebaker, 1995). Importantly, in Pennebaker's (1989) work, participants are asked not only to describe their emotional experience, but to "link your experience to your past, your present, or your future" (p. 251). Encouraging participants to delve into what they learned from their civic experience may result in better civic outcomes. Taken together, these lines of research suggest that both the duration and the focus of the writing exercise could be improved to facilitate civic values outcomes.

Another limitation of Study 1 is that I only examined what increases in civic engagement. The overarching goal of the present thesis was to address the decline of civic engagement; therefore, elucidating causes of the decline is just as important as reversing the decline. Further exploration into both what encourages and discourages civic engagement is critical, especially since both outcomes have rarely been examined together.

A final, potentially rich avenue for future research is the relationship between a sense of connection and civic engagement. Although the role that connection plays in well-being (Keyes, 1998; Ryan & Deci, 2001) and positive youth development (R. M. Lerner et al., 2009) has been reviewed in the present thesis, the links between connection and civic engagement were neglected in both Study 1 and Study 2. Numerous studies have shown correlational relationships between civic engagement and neighbourhood connection (Zaff et al., 2010), community connection (Kahne & Sporte, 2008), and school connection (Flanagan et al., 2010). A sense of inclusion or exclusion has also been linked to prosocial behaviour such as helping (Twenge, Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Bartels, 2007) and generosity (Aknin, Dunn, et al., 2013; Aknin et al., 2011). Taken together, these diverse lines of research beg the question of whether manipulating one's sense of connection can influence civic values – a question that will be the focus on the Study 3.

**Summary and conclusion.** The aim of the present study was to explore the roles of happiness, prosocial identity and prosocial acts in encouraging civic values, and the potential for a brief writing intervention to promote civic engagement. The hypotheses were: 1) people who wrote about prosocial experiences would have higher civic values and happiness; 2) people who wrote about prosocial experiences would be more likely to spend their money prosocially; 3) people who spent their money prosocially would have higher civic values and happiness; and 4) happiness would contribute to civic values. Based on the correlations between civic values and well-being in Study 1, and past research on happiness and generosity, I hoped to find evidence for a positive feedback loop between happiness and civic values. The findings did not support these hypotheses.

This is the first study to explore the impact of a simple writing exercise on civic values, and the first study to explore the potential for happiness and civic values to foster a positive feedback loop – measuring both civic values and behaviour outcomes over time. The present study included several methodological strengths, including baseline and follow-up measures, two experimental and two control groups to account for important civic contributors such as positive emotions. Because of these methodologies, we were able to show that happier people tended to spend their money on people they knew and remain happy. Less happy people were equally likely to donate, spend their money on themselves, or a mix of prosocial and personal spending. I also found that civic values increased following the writing task for all groups.

Therefore, neither the topic of the writing task, nor the particulars of the specific windfall spending choices, had any influence on happiness or civic values. Instead what people brought to the experiment (i.e., their initial level of happiness) was the best predictor of their behaviours and values during the experiment, suggesting that civic values may need stronger social influences or longer interventions in order to be increased (i.e., see Study 1).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

In this way, the present study is at odds with much of the recent research on prosocial behaviour and happiness. Future research should explore the influence of a sense of connection in levels of civic values, as connection is important to healthy functioning (Jetten, Haslam, Haslam, & Branscombe, 2009; Keyes, 2009b; Ryan & Deci, 2000) and a predictor of prosocial behaviours such as helping and generosity. In order to address key limitations of the present study, future research should also include prosocial or civic identity measures, analyse the quality and content of the personal stories for identity, learning and connection themes, and increase the duration of the writing exercise.

Despite the participants not experiencing any increases in happiness, one encouraging finding was that almost half of the participants donated their windfall, and 77% of participants chose to spend their entire windfall on other people. This lends evidence to the notion that people are generally good to each other (Aknin, Barrington-Leigh, et al., 2013), even if we didn't find evidence that they gained happiness from their good deeds (Dovidio et al., 2006).

In sum, the present study found evidence that a simple writing task can increase civic values, and that people who are happier are more likely to spend their money on people they know. These findings will be discussed in the context of Study 1 and 3 in the General Discussion.

## Chapter 4: Belonging and Civic Engagement

He aha te mea nui o te ao? He tangata! He tangata! He tangata!<sup>18</sup>

*What is the greatest thing on earth? It's people! It's people! It's people!*

### Introduction

Extensive evidence suggests that belonging is a core human motive (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Positive connections are integral to physical and mental health (Cole, 2009; Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010; Jetten et al., 2009; Keyes, 1998; Scarf, Hayhurst, et al., 2016; Scarf, Moradi, et al., 2016), whereas when people are isolated or ostracised their physical and mental health suffer (Jetten et al., 2012; Williams, 2002). Connection leads to helping and prosocial behaviour (Pavey et al., 2011; Twenge et al., 2007) whereas, ostracism and social isolation tend to increase antisocial behaviour such as intergroup discrimination (Greitemeyer, Traut-Mattausch, & Osswald, 2012; Nesdale, Lawson, Durkin, & Duffy, 2010) and aggression (Leary, Twenge, & Quinlivan, 2006). Arguably adolescence and emerging adulthood are times when belonging is especially important, as relationships are central to identity exploration and formation (Flanagan, Kim, Collura, & Kopish, 2015; Sullivan, Farrell, & Kliewer, 2006), while at the same time young people are hypersensitive to exclusion (Pharo et al., 2011).

Study 1 and 2 of the present thesis focused on civic values and factors identified as important to civic values – namely civic intentions, generosity, well-being and happiness. However, I neglected to explore the role of one key social phenomenon - connection. There are several reasons why the relationship between connection and civic values deserves further attention. First, past studies have linked belonging to positive youth outcomes such as

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<sup>18</sup> Māori proverb, see Brougham et al. (2012).

## Increasing Civic Engagement

resilience (Hayhurst et al., 2015; Scarf, Hayhurst, et al., 2016; Scarf, Moradi, et al., 2016), self-esteem (Hunter et al., 2013), and lower levels of depression (Cruwys et al., 2014).

Second, research has linked direct inclusion and exclusion feedback to prosocial behaviour such as helping (Dovidio et al., 2006; Pavey et al., 2011; Schroeder & Graziano, 2015).

Third, connection to community, neighbourhood, families and schools has been identified as important to civic engagement development (Flanagan, 2004; Pancer, 2015). Finally, existing research on belonging and civic engagement tends to be correlational or cross-sectional (Kahne & Sporte, 2008; Mahatmya & Lohman, 2012; Wray-Lake, Metzger, & Syvertsen, 2016), and when research is community-intervention based (e.g., Study 1 of the present thesis) limitations such as finding appropriate control groups, non-random sampling, and other factors that influence generalisability (e.g., intervention length, content, participant diversity) apply (see also T. D. Wilson, 2011).

The present study aims to address a major limitation of both Study 1 and Study 2 by exploring the role of social connection in civic engagement. The present study also endeavours to remedy other limitations from Study 1 by using an experimental rather than quasi-experimental design including random assignment to experimental and control groups, using normally engaged participants (rather than highly engaged), and attempting a brief intervention for the purpose of identifying a practical way to encouraging civic engagement through brief exercises. Since the findings from Study 2 suggested that focusing on prosocial behaviour reflection doesn't encourage civic values or behaviour, the present study has a different focus - *belonging* rather than happiness and generosity. The present study also emphasises Aotearoa New Zealand national identity rather than prosocial acts (e.g., donation or volunteering) in order to draw participants' attention to the concept of citizenship. Thus, Study 3 explores the potential for experimentally manipulated inclusion and exclusion to influence civic values in young people.

## Literature Review

**Exclusion and prosocial behaviour.** Whereas belonging tends to be salutary, social exclusion tends to be pernicious. Social exclusion encompasses phenomena such as ostracism and rejection, and refers to situations in which a person is denied social contact (Blackhart, Knowles, Nelson, & Baumeister, 2009). Research has shown that socially excluded participants experience increased blood pressure (Stroud, Tanofsky-Kraff, Wilfley, & Salovey, 2000), activation of the region of brain associated with physical pain (Eisenberger, Lieberman, & Williams, 2003), elevated cortisol (Dickerson & Kemeny, 2004), distress (Williams, Bernieri, Faulkner, Gada-Jain, & Grahe, 2000) and decreased psychosocial functioning (Baumeister, DeWall, Ciarocco, & Twenge, 2005; Hunter et al., in press). There is some evidence that exclusion can lead to emotional numbing (Twenge, Baumeister, Tice, & Stucke, 2001; Twenge & Campbell, 2003), however it is more likely that excluded people just feel worse than included people (Blackhart et al., 2009). Williams (2007) suggests that ostracism and related concepts may lead to dysfunctional decisions and behaviours because they threaten the fundamental need to belong.

Of particular relevance to the present study, Twenge et al. (2007) found that social exclusion decreased prosocial behaviour. Prosocial behaviour is defined as any action that benefits others and often entails a cost to the self (Dovidio et al., 2006). In a series of studies, Twenge et al. manipulated participants' sense of belonging by telling them that other students had rejected them, or that they would end up alone later in life. Excluded people donated less money, were less willing to volunteer for further experiments, were less helpful after a mishap, and cooperated less in a game with another student. Included participants were not more helpful than controls. Twenge et al. concluded that, "exclusion may impair some inner

## Increasing Civic Engagement

responses that are needed for prosocial behaviour. The inner state resulting from social exclusion may gear one to cope with threats rather than to be nice to others” (p.56).

There has been little research experimentally exploring the potential for exclusion to motivate or reduce prosocial behaviour in young people specifically, with the exception of (Coyne, Gundersen, Nelson, & Stockdale, 2011). Using a Cyberball paradigm and a small sample of secondary school students, they found that young people who had been socially rejected assigned lower monetary rewards to other participants, although this finding was a trend and not significant.

Despite the lack of clear evidence for this idea, there are reasons to believe that social exclusion may lead to prosocial behaviour under certain circumstances. Vollhardt (2009) explores the concept of altruism born of suffering (see also Staub, 2013). Unlike resilience research that suggests prosocial behaviour and well-being can be maintained despite challenges (Hayhurst et al., 2015), Vollhardt suggests that suffering can encourage prosociality through avenues such as ‘helping as coping’ and increased empathy (see also (Lim & DeSteno, 2016). Exclusion may also lead to prosocial behaviour as a means of re-establishing belonging (Hunter et al., in press). Leary (2005, 2010) argues that to be included, people are motivated to demonstrate that they are valuable group members. Prosocial behaviour may function to achieve this, especially if the group values the behaviour. Cuadrado, Tabernero, and Steinel (2015) demonstrated that under certain conditions excluded individuals behave prosocially (donate money), but only when they believe they have a chance to regain acceptance.

To summarise, while there are clear links between exclusion and antisocial behaviour, research on exclusion and prosocial behaviour has been mixed (Balliet & Ferris, 2013). There has been a dearth of research examining the link between exclusion and prosocial behaviour



in young people (Coyne et al., 2011), or the conditions under which exclusion may lead to prosocial behaviour (Cuadrado et al., 2015). Furthermore, while different forms of prosocial behaviour have been explored (e.g., donating money, helping), civic engagement specifically has not. Exclusion may have a particular impact on civic engagement because they are both in the social realm, and because civic engagement embodies generally held and easily accessible values across diverse groups in society. In this way, civic engagement may be a common or straightforward strategy to regain a sense of inclusion following exclusion feedback. The present study explores the divergent evidence in the context of civic engagement.

**Belonging and prosocial behaviour.** While the negative effects of social exclusion have been explored in depth in the lab, there has been a dearth of research focusing on the benefits of experimentally fostering a sense inclusion (Begen & Turner-Cobb, 2015; Scarf, Hayhurst, et al., 2016). Along with positive outcomes such as well-being (Keyes, 2002; Mackay et al., 2015; Ryan & Deci, 2000), there is some evidence that inclusion is linked to prosocial behaviour as well. For example, correlational research has shown that social acceptance and prosocial behaviour are related, and social contexts such as families, schools, peer groups, communities, work places, religious groups have profound influences on prosocial and civic behaviour (Pancer, 2015; Wray-Lake, Metzger, et al., 2016). As described in Study 2, Pavey et al. (2011) demonstrated that highlighting connectedness (e.g., through writing tasks) leads to greater prosocial intentions and behaviour.

There are several avenues by which social relationships and belonging can promote civic behaviour, such as encouragement, role modelling, values transmission, and political discussions. For example, one of the best predictors of volunteerism is being asked to volunteer (Stukas, Hoyer, et al., 2016; Vézina & Crompton, 2012; J. Wilson, 2000). During adolescence, parents and peers are often the ones asking, and adolescents are more likely to

## Increasing Civic Engagement

be supported and positively reinforced if valued others also volunteer (Youniss & Yates, 1997). Pratt, Hunsberger, Pancer, and Alisat (2003) found strong correlations between young people's values and behaviour and their perceptions of their friends' values and behaviour.

Importantly, research shows that interventions in schools and communities are unlikely to encourage youth civic engagement if the youth don't feel connected to the group (Harré, 2011). For example, research by Aknin and colleagues (2013) shows that people experience more benefits (subjective well-being) following prosocial spending when the giving fostered a sense of connection. Walton, Cohen, Cwir, and Spencer (2012) also highlighted this point in a series of studies on task motivation and mere belonging (i.e., a minimal social connection to another person or group). They found that when participants felt some small connection, even an irrelevant one (such as a shared birthday) their motivation and task persistence increased. The authors conclude that values and goals are constructed in social contexts, and even minimal cues of connectedness can affect important aspects of self.

Recent research suggests that a sense of belonging is not always salutary. Hunter et al. (in press) have identified both inclusion and exclusion as potential predictors of intergroup discrimination. In their series of studies, an increased sense of belonging was not only an outcome of in-group favouritism, but people who reported both high and low levels of belonging (manipulated through inclusion and exclusion feedback) showed more in-group favouritism compared to controls. The "relationship between in-group favouritism and belonging was independent of personal self-esteem, group-specific esteem and group identity" in each study. These findings suggest that belonging has a particular role to play in both as a motivator and outcome of anti-social behaviour, and also highlights the complexity of a sense of belonging as well as one's social identity. Perhaps, if alternative means to regain or show group membership following inclusion and exclusion feedback were available, anti-social responses would have been avoided.

**Inclusion and exclusion.** Many of the works described above manipulate both a sense of inclusion and exclusion in order to explore the impact of connection as a whole on behaviour and attitudes (Hayhurst, Iversen, Ruffman, Stringer, & Hunter, 2014). This may be especially important in the context of civic engagement, as we hope to elucidate not just how to promote participation, but also what is driving the decline. Our past work on belonging has highlighted that both inclusion and exclusion can lead to anti-social behaviour, specifically intergroup discrimination (Hunter et al., in press). Likewise, research has shown that prosocial behaviour can encourage further prosocial behaviour (Aknin et al., 2012) or alternatively antisocial behaviour (Merritt et al., 2012). Taken together, the mixed evidence on the nature of the outcomes from (a) inclusion and exclusion feedback, (b) past prosocial behaviour, and (c) the current state of civic engagement, suggest that factors that may strengthen or weaken civic engagement need to be studied together. Thus, one key limitation of both Study 1 and Study 2 of the present thesis is that they focused solely on what encouraged, and not what discouraged, civic engagement. The present study aims to remedy this limitation by exploring the effect of both inclusion and exclusion on civic engagement.

While there is some evidence that exclusion may lead to more prosocial behaviour (Lim & DeSteno, 2016), in the context of exploring civic engagement in a laboratory setting, exclusion will likely lead to a lower inclination to participate. There are two lines of evidence to support this hypothesis. First, exclusion likely leads to reduced self-esteem and lower positive affect (Blackhart et al., 2009). Second, negative emotions tend to narrow people's focus according to Fredrickson's (Fredrickson, 1998, 2001) broaden-and-build model; that is, a narrow focus precludes prosociality and public good. While the benefits of acute experimental inclusion have only rarely been explored (Begen & Turner-Cobb, 2015), it is likely that, along with increased well-being and positive affect, inclusion will encourage civic engagement.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Based on a review of the literature, there are two aspects of belonging that are particularly relevant to the present investigation: a sense of community belonging and a neighbourhood connection.

**Community belonging.** Community belonging is “the degree to which an individual is, or perceives to be, connected to their community,” (Hystad & Carpiano, 2012, p. 277). In the present study, the definition of community has been left intentionally ambiguous, in order to allow the participants to decide what community means to them based on their individual and collective social norms (see also Zaff et al., 2010). This is especially important in light of the findings from Study 2 in which participants were asked to reflect on civic behaviours designated by the experiment (i.e., volunteering and donating). Study 2 findings revealed that participants who wrote about donation or volunteering experiences did not have higher civic values and did not behave more prosocially than the control groups. This contrasts with the findings from Study 1 in which participants were allowed to choose their own workshops to attend and focus on their own projects, and in turn had higher civic intentions and civic values at the end of the events. The purpose of using a deliberately vague concept of community is to allow participants to define the groups that are important to them, thereby addressing the methodological differences between Study 1 and 2.

Despite its vague nature, community belonging has been linked to diverse outcomes such as health behaviours (Carpiano, 2006; Hystad & Carpiano, 2012) and is often used as a proxy for a component of civic engagement - social capital (Bobek, 2007; Helliwell & Barrington-Leigh, 2012; Laporte, Nauenberg, & Shen, 2008). When people are allowed to define their own community, they can use broad groups such as ethnicity or nation, or smaller groups such as school or family (Zaff et al., 2010). Varied communities have been linked to civic engagement by correlational research (Sherrod, 2007; Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, et al., 2016). Despite numerous lines of evidence highlighting the likely links between connection

and civic values, no research has directly investigated the impacts of acute belonging feedback on civic values.

**Neighbourhood connection.** Extensive research has directly linked neighbourhood connection to civic engagement, suggesting that perceived resources and civic opportunities in neighbourhoods are important predictors of civic participation (Bobek, 2007; Lenzi et al., 2012; Pancer, 2015; Putnam, 2001). For example, Duke et al. (2009), in their large study of young adults, found that stronger neighbourhood connection (along with family and school connection) predicted increased intentions to vote and volunteer, helping, involvement in activist and conservation groups, and civic trust. They concluded that the “contribution of cohesive neighbourhoods, along with family has been considered a ‘seed bed’ for the development of an active citizenry,” (p.167; see also Furstenberg, 2001). Neighbourhood connection is such a consistent civic engagement predictor that Zaff and colleagues (2010) included it as a factor in their active engaged citizenship (AEC) scale. Both community belonging and neighbourhood connection are examined in the present study, and will be referred to under the broader term ‘belonging’.

**Summary.** For the most part, research suggests that a sense of inclusion has been linked to physical and mental health, as well as prosocial behaviour. In contrast, a sense of exclusion has been linked to poor health and antisocial behaviour. Despite extensive research on inclusion and exclusion, neither has been directly empirically linked to civic values. The present study aims to remedy this, along with methodological and theoretical limitations from Study 1 and 2, by exploring the influence of acute belonging feedback on belonging, well-being and civic engagement.

Therefore, the present study has two hypotheses:

## Increasing Civic Engagement

- 1) Inclusion feedback will lead to an increased sense of belonging, civic engagement and well-being, compared to controls, and
- 2) Exclusion feedback will lead to a decreased sense of belonging, civic engagement and well-being, compared to controls.

## Study 3 Methods

**Participants.** One hundred and fifty young people (50 males) took part in this study. Their mean age was 20.2 and the age range was 17-29. Ninety-two (61%) participants identified with the majority ethnic group (Pākehā or New Zealand European), and 58 (39%) identified with a minority ethnic group (Māori, Pasifika, Asian, or ‘Other’). All participants were recruited through a student job search website, and paid minimum wage for participating.

**Materials and procedure.** The present study had three steps: 1) On the first was a group discussion; 2) On the second was feedback from the experimenter (i.e., inclusion, exclusion, or no feedback); and 3) On the third was the series of questionnaires assessing belonging, civic engagement and well-being. The exclusion paradigm followed the procedure outlined by Leary et al. (1995). Participants were randomly assigned to one of three groups (included feedback, excluded feedback, and no feedback) based on their participant number that they selected out of a box at the start of the experiment.

The study was introduced as being about social decisions and involved three parts: a group discussion, a survey and a group task. The study was run with groups of between 8-10 participants. All participants were given name tags on which they wrote their first name. Each person was instructed to learn the names of the others and encouraged to contribute to a group discussion. In order to make citizenship (in terms of nationality) salient, the group

discussion focused on what each participant thought New Zealanders ‘do often, do well and don’t do well’ (Haslam & McGarty, 2004). Participants discussed a variety of topics, including rugby, work ethic and culture. Participants were then asked to confidentially write down the names of two people from the group that they would like to work with in an upcoming group task. Participants then handed in their selection, and the experimenter ostensibly marked the responses.

After collating the participant’s choices, those in the exclusion condition were taken outside one at a time and informed that no one wanted to work with them (i.e., “I’m sorry to tell you this, but no-one chose to work with you”). Those in the inclusion condition were taken outside one at a time and informed that everyone wanted to work with them (i.e., “I have good news for you; everyone chose to work with you”). Participants in the no-feedback condition followed the same procedure as those in the preceding conditions except that they were not given feedback.

The participants were led back into the laboratory to a separate desk where they completed questionnaires assessing belonging, well-being and civic engagement. Five of the scales were the same as Study 2: civic values, civic intentions, generosity, well-being and mood. Two scales were added to explore the links between belonging and civic values: community belonging and neighbourhood connection.

***Civic values.*** The civic values scale was modified in Study 1 from Zaff et al.’s (2010) AEC civic duty scale. The measure has nine items, and asks participants questions such as, “I believe I can make a difference in my community.” Participants responded on a 1 (strongly disagree/not important/not well) to 5 (strongly agree/very important/very well) Likert scale. As in Study 1 and Study 2, there was an acceptable reliability of the 9-item civic values scale: Cronbach’s  $\alpha = .82$ ,  $n = 150$ .

## Increasing Civic Engagement

***Civic intentions.*** Civic intentions were measured using a modified version of Flanagan et al.'s (2007) expectations for engagement in community and political issues scale. Participants responded to questions such as, "When you think of the next few years, how likely are you to vote on a regular basis?" on a 1 (not at all likely) to 5 (extremely likely) Likert scale. As in Studies 1 and 2, there was an acceptable reliability of the 5-item civic intentions scale:  $\alpha = .68$ ,  $n = 150$ .

***Generosity.*** Generosity was measured using Smith and Hill's (2009) 10-item scale. Participants responded to items such as, "My decisions are often based on concern for the welfare of others", using a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Likert scale. As in Studies 1 and 2, there was an acceptable reliability of the generosity scale: Cronbach's  $\alpha = .84$ ,  $n = 150$ .

***Well-being.*** Well-being was measured using Keyes' (2009a) 14-item MHC-SF, which asks participants to respond to questions such as, "How often do you feel interested in life," on a 1 (never) to 6 (every day) Likert scale. As in Studies 1 and 2, there was an acceptable reliability of the well-being scale: Cronbach's  $\alpha = .85$ ,  $n = 150$ .

***Mood.*** Mood was measured using the Watson et al.'s (1988) 20-item Positive and Negative Affect Schedule (PANAS). Participants were asked to respond to each emotion (e.g., interested, angry) in terms of how they felt right now on a 1 (not at all) to 5 (extremely) Likert scale. As in Study 2, the scales had adequate reliability:  $\alpha = .82$  for the negative scale, and  $\alpha = .90$  for the positive scale,  $n = 150$ .

***Community belonging.*** Participants' sense of community belonging was measured using a slightly modified version of Sheldon and Bettencourt's (2002) 3-item group inclusion scale. The participant responded to three statements such as, "I feel included in my community", on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree) Likert scale. Validity of the



scale has been supported by associations between perceived belonging, positive affect, and motivation. In keeping with the findings reported by Sheldon and Bettencourt (who reported alphas of .80) the scale was found to be reliable, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .95$ ,  $n = 150$ .

***Neighbourhood connection.*** Neighbourhood connection was measured using Zaff et al.'s (2010) six-item AEC neighbourhood connection scale. Participants respond to questions such as, "Adults in my town or city listen to what I have to say," on a 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) Likert scale. In keeping with the findings reported by Zaff et al. (who reported an alpha of .75) the scale was found to be reliable, Cronbach's  $\alpha = .73$ ,  $n = 150$ .

The final section of the response booklet contained a series of manipulation checks. Here, participants were asked if they had (a) guessed the true purpose of the investigation, and (b) considered themselves to be New Zealanders (i.e., in order to ensure the groups' discussions would highlight nationality)<sup>19</sup>. Afterwards they were told that the study was over, and were thoroughly debriefed (i.e., informed that the inclusion and exclusion feedback was bogus).

### Study 3 Results

**Demographics.** The relationships between age and civic engagement (community belonging, neighbourhood connection, civic values, civic intentions, generosity) and well-being (well-being, mood) variables were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlations. Age was positively correlated with positive affect,  $r(150) = .19$ ,  $p < .05$ , but not correlated with any other variables (all  $r_s < .10$ ).

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<sup>19</sup> No participants guessed the purpose of the study and all participants considered themselves New Zealanders.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

I used independent *t*-tests in order to investigate differences between young men and young women (see Table 3.1).

Table 3.1

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Key Variables as a Function of Sex*

	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	Females	Males
Community Belonging	148	-1.93	14.41 (4.18)	15.76 (3.73)
Neighbour Connection	146	-0.63	19.10 (3.61)	19.52 (4.24)
Civic Values	146	0.55	37.68 (4.22)	37.28 (4.30)
Civic Intentions	148	1.73	13.33 (3.05)	12.36 (3.56)
Generosity	144	0.98	40.27 (4.28)	39.46 (5.56)
Well-being	147	-0.19	62.29 (7.64)	62.56 (9.19)
Positive Affect	148	2.26**	24.11 (7.65)	27.22 (8.52)
Negative Affect	147	-0.41	13.67 (4.28)	13.96 (3.68)

Note. \*\*  $p < .01$ .

After using the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons, there was only one sex difference: males had greater positive affect,  $t(148) = 2.26$ ,  $p < .05$ .

I used independent *t*-tests in order to investigate differences between people who identified with a minority ethnic group or the majority ethnic group (see Table 3.2).

Table 3.2

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Key Variables as a Function of Ethnic Group*

	<i>df</i>	<i>t</i>	Minority	Majority
Community Belonging	148	-1.07	14.41 (4.32)	15.14 (3.91)
Neighbour Connection	146	1.56	19.86 (3.88)	18.86 (3.76)
Civic Values	146	0.01	37.55 (4.35)	37.54 (4.19)
Civic Intentions	148	2.94**	13.97 (3.13)	12.40 (3.19)
Generosity	147	-0.45	39.77 (4.74)	40.13 (4.79)
Well-being	144	-0.66	61.83 (7.56)	62.74 (8.67)
Positive Affect	148	0.09	25.22 (8.50)	25.10 (7.81)
Negative Affect	147	0.76	14.09 (4.45)	13.57 (3.86)

Note. \*\*  $p < .01$ .

After using the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons, there was only one ethnicity difference: people who identified with a minority ethnic group had significantly higher levels of civic intentions compared to those who identified with the majority ethnicity group,  $t(148) = 2.94, p < .01$ .

**Main findings.** I used a series of between ANOVAs to investigate whether there were any differences between feedback groups (included, excluded or no feedback). Community belonging, neighbourhood connection, civic values, generosity, well-being and negative affect were the dependent variables. Feedback group (included, excluded, no feedback) was the independent variable. Since age was positively correlated with positive affect, I used an ANCOVA with age as the covariate when examining the differences between feedback groups (included, excluded and no feedback) in positive affect. Since there were significant differences between ethnic groups for civic intentions, I used a 2 (ethnic group) x 3 (feedback group) ANOVA examining the differences between feedback groups (included, excluded and no feedback) in civic intentions. Means and standard deviations are presented in Table 3.3. Analysis of variance statistics are presented in Table 3.4.

Table 3.3

*Means (and Standard Deviations) of Key Variables as a Function of Included, Excluded, and No Feedback Groups*

	Included	Excluded	No Feedback
Community Belonging	16.73 (2.38)	11.35 (4.24) <sup>***</sup>	16.13(3.23)
Neighbour Connection	19.92 (4.18)	18.27 (3.33)	19.45 (3.78)
Civic Values	37.65 (4.37)	37.33 (3.80)	37.55 (4.24)
Civic Intentions	12.88 (3.41)	13.57 (2.93)	12.35 (3.36)
Generosity	40.78 (4.34)	38.88 (4.01)	40.15 (5.50)
Well-being	64.02 (7.95)	61.63 (7.64)	61.54 (8.89)
Positive Affect	24.45 (7.99)	23.09 (6.79)	27.49 (8.62)
Negative Affect	12.71 (3.98)	14.83 (4.49)	13.81 (3.63)

Note. <sup>\*\*\*</sup>  $p < .001$

## Increasing Civic Engagement

As shown in Table 3.4, the only significant effect for feedback was for community belonging,  $F(2, 147) = 36.97, p < .001$ . Post-hoc comparisons using the Bonferroni test indicated that the mean score for the excluded group was significantly lower than the included group and the no feedback group, all  $ps < .001$ .

Table 3.4

*ANOVA Statistics Comparing Mean Belonging, Civic Engagement and Well-being between Feedback Groups*

	<i>df</i>	<i>F</i>	Sig
Community Belonging	2, 147	36.97	.001***
Neighbour Connection	2, 145	2.34	.10
Intentions	2, 144	0.63	.54
Values	2, 145	0.09	.91
Generosity	2, 143	1.86	.16
Well-being	2, 146	1.45	.24
Positive Affect	2, 147	4.19	.02
Negative Affect	2, 147	3.28	.04

*Note.* Belonging = community belonging; Neighbour = neighbourhood connection; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

Excluded participants tended to report greater levels of negative affect than did included participants,  $F(2, 147) = 3.28, p = .04, \eta_p^2 = .05$  and that participants in the no feedback group tended to report higher positive affect than either the included or excluded groups,  $F(2, 143) = 3.49, p = .03, \eta_p^2 = .05$ , after controlling for age. The effect of exclusion/inclusion or no-feedback on both positive and negative affect was significant until the Holm-Bonferroni correction for multiple comparisons was applied.

I conducted post hoc power analyses using GPower (Faul et al., 2007) to explore whether the present non-significant results were due to a lack of statistical power. Results suggested that the sample sizes were adequate, as all power  $(1 - \beta) > .83$ . It is therefore unlikely that the negative findings can be attributed to a limited sample size.

**Correlations.** In order to investigate whether there were differences in the relations between variables between the three feedback groups, belonging, civic engagement and well-being variables were investigated using Pearson's product-moment correlations separately for each feedback group.

First, the relations between belonging, civic engagement, and well-being were investigated for the included feedback group (see Table 3.5)

Table 3.5

*Correlations between the Key Variables for the Included Group*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.Neighbour	.50***						
3.Values	.16	.42**					
4.Intentions	.29*	.28	.58***				
5.Generosity	.32*	.46**	.25	.19			
6.Well-being	.30*	.48***	.38**	.13	.20		
7.Positive Affect	.17	.24	.21	.30*	.40	.17	
8. Negative	.11	.16	.16	.27	-.13	-.01	.21

*Note.* 1.Belonging = community belonging; 2.Neighbour = neighbourhood connection; 3.Values = civic values; 4.Intentions = civic intentions; 5.Generosity; 6.Well-being, 7.Positive Affect; 8.Negative Affect; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Table 3.5, community belonging was positively correlated with neighbourhood connection, civic intentions, generosity and well-being for the included group. For the most part, the belonging variables, civic variables and well-being variables (but not mood) were positively correlated with each other for the included group.

Unexpectedly, well-being was not correlated with mood. Likewise, the only relationship between mood and civic engagement was a positive correlation between positive affect and civic intentions.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Finally, the relations between belonging, civic engagement, and well-being were investigated for the no feedback (control) group (see Table 3.6).

Table 3.6

*Correlations between the Key Variables for the No Feedback Group*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.Neighbour	.42**						
3.Values	.42**	.27					
4.Intentions	.12	.30*	.56***				
5.Generosity	.30*	.47***	.34*	.23			
6.Well-being	.45**	.43**	.34*	.13	.30*		
7.Positive Affect	.27*	.45**	.18	.30*	.15	.25	
8. Negative	.09	.13	-.10	-.02	-.12	-.14	.14

*Note.* 1.Belonging = community belonging; 2.Neighbour = neighbourhood connection; 3.Values = civic values; 4.Intentions = civic intentions; 5.Generosity; 6.Well-being, 7.Positive Affect; 8.Negative Affect; \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ ; \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Table 3.6, and like the included group, the belonging, civic and well-being variables (but not mood) were positively correlated with each other for the no feedback group. Again, like the included group, well-being was not correlated with mood. Unlike the included group, positive affect was positively correlated with community belonging, neighbourhood connection and civic intentions.

Then, the relationships between belonging, civic engagement, and well-being were investigated for the excluded feedback group (see Table 3.7)

Table 3.7

*Correlations between the Key Variables for the Excluded Group*

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
2.Neighbour	.18						
3.Values	.15	.08					
4.Intentions	.15	.16	.41**				
5.Generosity	-.12	-.04	.29	.18			
6.Well-being	.12	.35*	.09	.15	.09		
7.Positive Affect	-.06	.11	-.06	-.29	.06	.26	
8. Negative	-.41**	-.30*	-.21	-.01	.13	-.16	-.12

*Note.* 1.Belonging = community belonging; 2.Neighbour = neighbourhood connection; 3.Values = civic values; 4.Intentions = civic intentions; 5.Generosity; 6.Well-being, 7.Positive Affect; 8.Negative Affect; \*  $p < .05$ , \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ .

As can be seen in Table 3.7, for the excluded group, community belonging was not positively correlated with any other variables, and was negatively correlated with negative affect. This means that the higher the sense of community belonging, the less the negative affect. Likewise, neighbourhood connection was positively correlated with well-being, and negatively correlated with negative affect. Civic intentions and civic values were positively correlated. There were no other significant correlations between the belonging, civic engagement and well-being variables for the excluded group.

### Study 3 Discussion

The present study aimed to explore the potential for acute inclusion and exclusion feedback to influence levels of civic engagement and well-being. The hypotheses were that: 1) inclusion feedback would lead to increased sense of belonging, civic engagement and well-being, compared to controls; and 2) exclusion feedback would lead to a decreased sense of belonging, civic engagement and well-being, compared to controls. The results showed no such effects.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

The excluded group had a significantly lower sense of community belonging compared to the included and no feedback groups. There were no other differences between groups. These results suggest that (a) a sense of belonging was successfully lowered for excluded participants; (b) a lowered sense of community belonging had no influence on other belonging, civic engagement, or well-being variables; and (c) included participants did not have a higher sense of belonging than did participants in the no feedback group. Therefore, we were unable to test hypothesis 1, since sense of belonging was not successfully increased for the included group. Furthermore, the results did not support hypothesis 2, as the exclusion feedback did not influence civic engagement and well-being. Explanations for these findings in the context of the belonging, civic engagement and well-being literatures will be discussed below, along with implications, limitations and suggestions for future research.

**Belonging.** The differences in sense of community belonging between excluded, included, and no feedback groups suggested that the exclusion manipulation worked, in that excluded participants felt a lower sense of belonging. However, we expected the included participants to feel a stronger sense of belonging compared to the no feedback group. Instead no differences were found. The lack of difference between the inclusion and no feedback groups may be because the community belonging measure is not sensitive to inclusion feedback. Depending on what community was salient at the time of responding, participants may not have felt that the inclusion from the study group influenced their belonging to their community. Other measures may better pick up on a sense of belonging to small and temporary groups (see Hunter et al., in press). Likewise, the group discussion may have fostered a sense of inclusion for both the no feedback and included groups equally, which may account for the same levels of community belonging found for both groups (Blackhart et al., 2009). Future research should ensure the control group doesn't have any opportunity for increasing their sense of belonging (i.e., by being part of a group discussion). Alternatively,



participants could complete belonging, civic engagement and well-being scales before and after the group discussion in order to compare within-group belonging, civic engagement and well-being at baseline and post-intervention.

There were no differences in levels of neighbourhood connection between feedback groups, suggesting that this measure is not sensitive to acute belonging feedback. Perhaps this finding should not be surprising since the participants were not neighbours or in their neighbourhood during the experiment. Therefore, the contributions that community belonging and neighbourhood connection make to civic engagement remain unclear.

**Well-being.** Another unexpected finding was that the included participants did not have a higher sense of well-being than the other groups. These present findings contrast with a considerable amount of evidence that inclusion influences well-being in the short and long term (Lyubomirsky et al. 2005; Pharo et al., 2011). For example, Leary's Sociometer Theory suggests that self-esteem is a gauge of relational value – when a sense of belonging is threatened self-esteem drops in order to indicate that changes need to be made to improve relationships (Leary et al., 1995). While we did not measure self-esteem specifically, Keyes' (2009) scales are highly correlated with self-esteem (Lamers, Westerhof, Bohlmeijer, ten Klooster, & Keyes, 2011), and our past work has shown that the same feedback does influence self-esteem in the expected directions (see Hayhurst et al., 2014; Hunter et al., in press). Despite the clear potential for inclusion feedback to influence well-being (Begen & Turner-Cobb, 2015), the present findings align with Gerber and Wheeler's (2009) and Blackhart et al.'s (2009) meta-analyses that suggest few well-being differences between controls and inclusion groups across studies. Future research could explore the relation between acute inclusion and well-being further by using other methods of inclusion and exclusion feedback (e.g., Cyberball paradigms), emphasising the importance of the group task, or using difference measures of belonging and well-being.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Some evidence suggests that people feel a sense of numbness following exclusion (Blackhart et al., 2009). If the numbness hypothesis was correct we would have expected the excluded group to be no different than the no feedback group in terms of affect and well-being, and the included group to have higher levels of positive affect and well-being. Since no effects in terms of well-being, positive affect or negative affect were found, the present findings are not consistent with the numbness hypotheses.

**Civic engagement.** Contrary to past research suggesting that exclusion can promote levels of prosocial behaviour (e.g., Twenge et al., 2007), the present findings showed no such effects. Civic intentions and values were the same across the three groups – included, excluded and no feedback. Nevertheless, findings showed moderate correlations between belonging, civic engagement and well-being for the included and no feedback groups, but not for the excluded group. This finding sits alongside extant research suggesting belonging is correlated with civic engagement and well-being (see Pancer, 2015; Sherrod, Torney-Purta et al., 2010, for reviews). This findings also suggests that normal relationships between well-being and civic engagement may be disrupted for people who are excluded – this findings will be discussed in more depth below.

The present study provides a novel take on correlation-based research by showing that the belonging, civic engagement and well-being variables were not correlated for the excluded group. Although exclusion did not reduce civic engagement, we were able to show that it disrupted normal relationships between well-being and civic engagement. Future research should explore whether civic engagement and well-being are linked for people who are chronically isolated as well as people who are temporarily or experimentally excluded. If chronically isolated people have similar well-being, belonging and civic engagement profiles to the temporarily excluded participants in the present study, it would provide evidence

explaining the present civic engagement decline – i.e., excluded people don't experience the same link between well-being and civic engagement as included people.

It should be noted that there were differences between the present study and other acute belonging feedback studies that showed effects on prosociality. For example, Gerber and Wheeler (2009) suggest that antisocial behaviour is most likely to occur following rejection if it gives participants a chance to regain control, but in the absence of an opportunity to regain control people will behave prosocially in order to regain a sense of belonging. It appears that responding to civic participation questions may not fulfil either of these needs. Perhaps different forms of civic participation, such as the real-time opportunities to help (i.e., see Twenge et al., 2007), might be more relevant to control and belonging threats.

**Limitations and future research.** A key difference between the present study and Study 1 that may explain the lack of significant civic engagement differences between groups was the salience of prosocial identities. Jetten et al. (2009) describe the importance of understanding the role social identities play in social contexts – people can define their sense of self in personal as well as social terms. Likewise, Walton et al.'s (2012) paper on mere belonging found that social connection cues in the presence of explicit goals (e.g., math performance) had the potential to influence not just behaviours (e.g., task persistence) but also emotions and deep-seated values. In the present study the participants discussed New Zealand identity (e.g., what New Zealanders do well). In some cases civic behaviours were mentioned (e.g., welcoming to outsiders), but for the most part discussions focused on civic-irrelevant topics (e.g., rugby) or even antisocial behaviour (e.g., student binge drinking, domestic violence). Therefore, a limitation of the present study was that the group discussion, though intended to highlight citizenship, may have failed to highlight prosocial citizenship or

## Increasing Civic Engagement

identity. Furthermore, I did not measure civic identity specifically, only the closely related concept of civic values.

**Conclusions.** The present study explored the potential of acute inclusion and exclusion to influence well-being and civic engagement. The results showed that although a sense of community belonging was effectively manipulated for the excluded group, no corresponding changes in civic engagement or well-being were found. Correlational findings revealed that civics, well-being, and belonging were positively correlated for the included and no feedback groups, but not for the excluded group. In light of evidence from Studies 1 and 2, this suggests that the exclusion feedback disrupted normal relationships between belonging, civic engagement and well-being, although more research on why this might happen, or if the same is true in other populations is needed.

In light of these somewhat underwhelming findings, future research could focus on the role of prosocial identities and alternative expressions of civic engagement (e.g., actual behaviours) to elucidating the links between belonging, civic engagement and well-being. In the context of this thesis, the present findings suggest that longer civic-focused interventions (i.e., ReGeneration events) or reflection exercises (i.e., writing tasks) are more influential to civic values than inclusion and exclusion feedback. While evidence suggests that community belonging is linked to civic engagement, it is not the zeitgeist to the present civic engagement decline, and future research is clearly warranted.

## Chapter 5: General Discussion

“Ko te mahi nui kē ko te marotiritiri i te whenua haumako kei roto i ō rātau poho ki te whakatō i ngā purapura ki roto i a rātau,” (Milroy, 2015).

*The main task is the cultivation of the fertile ground in their hearts to plant the seed within them.*

### Summary of Findings

Recent evidence suggests that civic engagement is declining (Diamond; 2008; Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2016; McCollum, 2016; Putnam, 2000; Vowles, 2004). Because of its implications for democracy, healthy communities, society, and the ability for young people to address the complex challenges of their generation (Hayward, 2012), the low levels civic engagement are attracting the attention of researchers, educators, practitioners and policy-makers. The present thesis aimed to address this decline by exploring three ways to increase youth civic engagement in New Zealand.

In the first set of studies I examined whether taking part in ReGeneration events would increase participants' civic intentions (Study 1a) and civic values (Study 1b). In Study 1b, I also examined the psychosocial factors that contribute to civic values (generosity, well-being and civic intentions), and whether a nine-item civic values scale would be better supported in the present context than a 12-item civic duty scale developed in the United States. In Study 2, I examined the potential of a prosocial writing recall task to encourage civic values, happiness, and prosocial behaviour. In Study 3, I examined the potential for acute inclusion and exclusion feedback to influence sense of belonging, civic engagement and well-being.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

In terms of this thesis as a whole, three hypotheses were tested: 1) participating in young changemaker (ReGeneration) events would increase participants' civic engagement with respect to intentions and values; 2) reflecting and writing on prosocial behaviour would increase civic values and encourage further prosocial behaviour; and 3) inclusion feedback would increase civic engagement and exclusion feedback would reduce civic engagement. This first hypothesis was supported; the second and third hypotheses were partially supported.

With regard to the first hypothesis, the results revealed that ReGeneration participants experienced increases in civic intentions (Study 1a). These findings suggest that participating in events that explore key challenges of this generation (e.g. global poverty, climate change) and skills that can be used to address these challenges (e.g. creative storytelling, project development) increased young people's intentions to engage in community and political activities. The findings from Study 1b revealed that ReGeneration events also increased civic values – the motivation to give back to communities and society, and that interpersonal generosity uniquely contributed to civic values outcomes, after controlling for initial civic values scores, well-being and civic intentions. Additionally, as civic values have rarely been explored in New Zealand, I conducted a factor analysis on Zaff et al.'s (2010) civic duty scale, revealing that a nine-item civic values scale was a better fit in the present context.

The findings from Study 1 are consistent with extant work suggesting that supportive youth development programmes that focus on engaging with challenges and promoting relevant skills (Hayhurst et al., 2015) can influence intentions to contribute to communities and society (Lerner et al., 2003) and civic engagement (Pancer, 2015; Sherrod, 2007). This research represents the first study exploring the potential to increase civic intentions and civic values through youth programming in New Zealand, and the first study worldwide to directly

link interpersonal generosity to civic values above and beyond well-being, initial levels of civic values, and civic intentions.

With regard to the second hypothesis, the findings from Study 2 revealed that reflecting on and writing about recent events for 10 minutes – whether it was on prosocial, positive or objective topics – increased civic values. Receiving and spending \$10 did not increase happiness or civic values, regardless of how the money was spent. Study 2 also showed that people who were happier were more likely to spend money on people they knew (prosocially) and remain happy, that is, prosocial spending and happiness were correlated across time. Writing about prosocial topics did not influence levels of civic values or happiness, and did not increase the likelihood of prosocial spending, compared to writing about recent positive or objective events. These findings are at odds with the bulk of research in the field that suggests generous acts, and reflecting on generous acts, lead to happiness (Aknin et al., 2012; Dunn et al., 2008). However, the findings highlight the importance of reflection in encouraging civic values.

Finally, with regard to the third hypothesis, findings from Study 3 revealed that although exclusion feedback reduced participants' sense of community belonging, it had no other impact on civic engagement or well-being. Inclusion feedback did not increase participants' sense of belonging, civic engagement, or well-being compared to the control (no feedback) group. These findings contradict considerable evidence that belonging is linked to prosocial behaviour (Twenge et al., 2007) and well-being (Keyes, 1998; Leary et al., 1995). However, Study 3 findings revealed that belonging, civic engagement and well-being were correlated for the included and control groups, but not for the excluded group. This suggests that the exclusion feedback disrupted normal relationships between these factors.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

To summarize, the present thesis explored ways by which to increase civic engagement, in particular civic values, in young New Zealanders. I ran three studies – one quasi-experimental study with a community sample and two experiments on brief interventions in the lab. The most promising findings were from the community sample, where ReGeneration participants experienced significant increases in civic intentions and civic values compared to controls, and generosity uniquely contributed to civic values outcomes. I also found that a brief, 10-minute writing task intervention increased civic values. Inclusion and exclusion feedback had no impact on civic values, and in general, well-being and happiness were correlated with civic values, but not once other civic engagement factors were controlled for. Taken together, these findings support past research highlighting the complexity of civic engagement, and suggest that community-based interventions may be better suited to increasing civic engagement and addressing civic decline than brief, prosocial spending or belonging-based interventions.

**Strengths.** Whereas there are numerous studies exploring civic engagement levels and its correlates (Bolstad, 2012; Satherley, 2011), there are few studies on how to increase civic engagement, and fewer still exploring ways by which to encourage civic engagement in young New Zealanders. The focus of the present study is especially important considering the vast differences in civic engagement and its predictors between national, cultural, ethnic, SES and age groups (Foster-Bey, 2008; Sherrod, Flanagan, & Youniss, 2002; Wray-Lake, Rote, Gupta, Godfrey, & Sirin, 2015). These differences mean that overseas models of civic engagement may not adequately explain civic engagement in New Zealand. Furthermore, this is the first study to look at civic engagement in a range of young people from adolescence through to emerging adulthood, and the first to examine the differences in civic engagement between majority (Pākehā/ New Zealand European) and minority (Māori, Pasifika, Asian and other) ethnic groups in New Zealand.



The present thesis highlights the importance of generosity to civic values. In Study 1b, generosity at T2 uniquely contributed to civic values at T2, once controlling for initial levels of civic values, well-being and civic intentions. In Study 2, generosity at T2 (after the writing task) uniquely contributed to civic values at T2, after controlling for initial levels of civic values, well-being, happiness, and civic intentions. In Study 3, generosity and civic values were correlated for the included and no feedback group, but not for the excluded group. Taken together, these findings suggest that interpersonal generosity – caring about the welfare of close others – may be an important foundation for wider circles of care, i.e., communities, countries or worldwide. This further supports Sherrod and Lauckhardt's (2008) three part definition of civic engagement which includes care for others and tolerance, and Flanagan and Christen's (2013) suggesting that civic engagement means realizing that one's life and goals are tied to the lives and goals of others. It also suggests that civic engagement means more than just patriotism or the act of voting, but is linked to a deeper sense of responsibility towards others (Zaff et al., 2010). The relation between generosity and civic values will be discussed further below.

The present study makes a unique contribution to civic engagement theory by attempting to increase civic values experimentally – through brief interventions. Brief interventions may be particularly useful in addressing civic disengagement, as they can be used in multiple contexts with diverse groups and require minimal resources. Experimental research also allows us to pinpoint key contributors of civic engagement by taking a complex, multidimensional construct and isolating factors that influence it. For example, because of the experimental design I was able to show that reflection on diverse topics - not just prosocial topics - led to increased civic values. I believe using mixed methods - both quasi-experimental and experimental - provides novel insights into civic engagement (described in further detail in the implications section). In particular, I was able to examine key parts of the

## Increasing Civic Engagement

community-based intervention experimentally, providing further evidence on the effectiveness of particular aspects of the intervention (e.g., reflection).

For the reasons listed above, the present thesis considers several key gaps in the literature by using methods derived from social and positive psychology to attempt to address an important social issue – the decline of civic engagement.

## Limitations

Despite its strengths, the present thesis has several limitations. Most importantly, none of the studies were longitudinal. Although evidence suggests that both civic intentions and civic values (Blais & Achen, 2010; Oesterle et al., 2004; Zaff et al., 2011) predict future civic behaviour, I was not able to test whether this was true for increased civic values in the present thesis. This is especially important in light of research from Hattie, Marsh, Neill, and Richards (1997) that suggests that many benefits of youth development programmes disappear once people return to their normal environments (but see Hayhurst et al., 2015; Hunter et al., 2013). A longitudinal design would allow us to explore the role of predictors and make causal inferences about civic values, civic intentions and generosity. For example, in a very recent study on developmental changes in social responsibility, Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, et al. (2016) used a large sample and an accelerated longitudinal research design to explore adolescent social responsibility values across time. Because of the research design, Wray-Lake et al. were able to demonstrate the importance of ecological assets (e.g., fair society beliefs and volunteer experience) in fostering social responsibility values.

The civic engagement measures used in the present thesis were a further limitation. Walker (2002) criticises most measures of political engagement for being unstructured, vague, and open to a multitude of interpretations. Civic intentions and civic values were

chosen as outcome variables because they predict future civic behaviours, they encompass both community and political aspects of civic engagement, and they can be increased through interventions. However, as civic engagement is multidimensional (Wray-Lake, Metzger, et al., 2016; Zaff et al., 2010), exploring only two civic outcomes means our understanding of civic engagement is limited.

Thus, future research should include more civic engagement measures. For example, (Wray-Lake, Syvertsen, et al., 2016) investigated social responsibility values, informal helping, political beliefs, civic skills, environmental behaviour, volunteering, voting intentions, and news consumption in their large study exploring multidimensional models of adolescent civic engagement. Other measures that would aid our understanding of civic engagement include civic knowledge (Torney-Purta, 2002), social trust (Flanagan et al., 2010), self-efficacy (Hunter et al., 2010), self-esteem (Kafka et al., 2012), social capital (Putnam, 2000), identity (Scarf, Hayhurst, et al., 2016; Scarf, Moradi, et al., 2016), activism (Sherrod, Flanagan, Kassimir, & Syvertsen, 2006a, 2006b) and school climate (Flanagan & Stout, 2010). Likewise, qualitative research may help elucidate the complex nature of the phenomenon (e.g. Hayward, 2012; McCollum, 2015; Wood, 2011). In short, exploring civic intentions and civic values outcomes is a platform but not a terminus for our understanding of the topic in New Zealand.

## **Future Research**

Along with longitudinal, qualitative and more civic measures, the present thesis lays the foundations for several empirical questions. In particular, the results from Study 1 and Study 3 suggested that people who identified with a minority ethnic group (Māori, Pasifika, Asian, or other) had higher levels of civic engagement in terms of civic values and civic intentions. This contrasts with research from the United States that tends to find ethnic

## Increasing Civic Engagement

minorities had lower levels of civic engagement (Bogard & Sherrod, 2008; Flanagan, Cumsille, et al., 2007). It is important to note that none of the present samples were representative of New Zealand's ethnic minorities; Study 1 consisted of a self-selected group of highly engaged young people, and Study 3 participants were all tertiary students. Therefore the findings are not generalisable, but do pose interesting questions about whether ethnic minorities from New Zealand engage differently than the majority ethnic group (Pākehā/New Zealand European), and differently from other ethnic minorities worldwide, and finally, whether Māori, Pasifika, Asian and other minority groups engage differently from each other. Diverse evidence from the well-being, political and community-based literature in New Zealand (Houkamau & Sibley, 2010; Manuela & Sibley, 2013; Raihania & Walker, 2007; Sanders et al., 2008; Sibley & Liu, 2007) suggest this may be true, although more research is needed.

Another topic for future exploration is the role that civic engagement plays in well-being and positive youth development. The present findings suggest that well-being and related variables such as positive emotions and happiness were positively correlated with civic values, but not after controlling for other civic engagement variables. However, the group of highly engaged, self-identified young changemakers – ReGeneration participants – had very high well-being (Hayhurst, 2014), and well-being and civic engagement were correlated for the included and no feedback groups in Study 3, but not the excluded group. As political and developmental scientists claim that democracy is linked to individual well-being (Pancer, 2015; Vowles, 2004) I believe we need to explore the links between well-being and civic engagement further. As discussed in Study 2, the self-determination theory concepts of connection, autonomy and mastery (Ryan & Deci, 2001), and social identity (Jetten et al., 2012; Scarf et al., 2016) may be particularly useful in this regard.

## Implications

**How to increase civic engagement.** The present thesis explored the impact of three interventions on civic engagement in young New Zealanders, and thus has practical implications in terms of promoting engagement, and theoretical implications in terms of elucidating engagement. The most promising findings were from Studies 1a and 1b – the community-based ReGeneration events, in which civic intentions and civic values were increased compared to controls. In Study 2, a 10-minute recall and writing task increased civic values for all participants, and these elevated levels remained high after receiving and spending a surprise monetary windfall, regardless of how people spent their windfall. In Study 3, acute inclusion and exclusion feedback did not impact civic engagement. Taken together, these findings offer novel insights into ways by which to increase civic engagement in young people, insights that will be discussed in turn below.

Results from Studies 1 and 2 suggest that reflection may play a crucial role in increasing civic values. This is consistent with past research that highlights the role of reflection in well-being (Pennebaker & Smyth, 2016) and learning contexts (Eyler & Giles Jr, 1999). Research has rarely shown effects following such a brief intervention or from such diverse reflection topics, including the control groups who wrote objectively about recent events or recent positive events. Future research should explore reflection topics further as this may be a practical, low-resource way to increase civic engagement in young people (see for example Cohen and Sherman's (2014) discussion of the benefits of self-affirmation).

Interpersonal generosity was shown to uniquely contribute to civic values outcomes following ReGeneration events (Study 1b) and following the writing task (Study 2). This is the first study to highlight the importance of this relation, suggesting that generosity-related programming, (i.e. in schools or institutions; see Evans, 2016; Hayhurst & Evans, 2011), may

## Increasing Civic Engagement

promote broader community and political engagement as well. Furthermore, this finding has implications for theories of research that suggest the potential for widening circles of care. For example, evidence from Fredrickson's (1998, 2001) broaden-and-build model of positive emotions suggests an upward spiral of positivity, that when people have more positive emotions their personal resources such as resilience is increased and their ability to contribute to their families and communities is enhanced, in turn creating more positive emotions. Likewise, evidence from social identity research suggests that people behave more prosocially when they are encouraged to think that their in-group is more inclusive (Gaertner & Dovidio, 2014). These theories describe numerous benefits of widening circles of care, and suggest that future research on the potential to foster citizenship through interpersonal generosity merits further attention.

Lab-based experiments have considerable benefits, including being able to control for variables and establishing cause and effect. However, it is possible that several practices integral to the positive outcomes following ReGeneration events (Study 1) were lost in translation to the lab (Study 2 and Study 3). Possible missing ingredients in the lab-based studies include the tuakana-teina model, biculturalism, strengths-based approach, democratic practice, positive emotions and the difference between membership and inclusion. These are discussed below.

The tuakana-teina (big sibling-little sibling) model meant that ReGeneration participants were encouraged to share their knowledge as well as learn, with the aim of promoting everyone's (organisers and new members) sense of self-efficacy, empowerment, and mastery (Winitana, 2012). In this way, participants were encouraged to take ownership of the goals, mahi (work) and culture of the organisation – thus providing the civic or democratic practice considered integral to civic engagement development (Flanagan, 2009; Flanagan, Cumsille, et al., 2007). As new members gained practical experience running

workshops and sharing their knowledge, they gained another key aspect of civic engagement – membership (Sherrod & Lauckhardt, 2008). As findings from Study 3 suggested that exclusion and inclusion feedback did not impact civic engagement, membership may be an alternative connection-related avenue of research.

Biculturalism in Aotearoa New Zealand means that Te Tiriti o Waitangi<sup>20</sup> is recognised as the founding document of the nation, and Māori are recognised as the tangata whenua (people of the land), and Pākehā and other newcomers are recognised as tangata Tiriti (the people here by virtue of Te Tiriti o Waitangi). Roberts and Bolstad (2010) reported that ReGeneration was “infused with Māori language and tikanga<sup>21</sup>, and this was often done in ways that intentionally provided a learning experience, such as the modelling of the tuakana-teina relationship on the first day of the hui (event)” (p. 37). Research has explored various psychological influences of biculturalism in New Zealand (Sibley & Liu, 2007, 2013) but not in terms of benefits for Māori and non-Māori alike in youth development or civic engagement contexts.

A strengths-based approach (for both theory and practice) suggests that every individual, every group and every organisation has strengths, and identifying these assets is a tool for promoting positive development. In terms of ReGeneration events, the strengths-based approach meant that participants’ autonomy, unique skills, talents, and perspectives were cultivated (Park, Peterson, & Seligman, 2004; Roberts & Bolstad, 2010). Another strengths-based approach involved using positive emotions as a tool for encouraging engagement in difficult topics and complex challenges (Harré, 2011). Roberts and Bolstad (2010) reported that many ReGeneration participants described feeling positive and hopeful

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<sup>20</sup> The Treaty of Waitangi.

<sup>21</sup> Tikanga loosely translates as the Māori way or correct way to do things, and applies to customs, meanings protocol and practice. Te Aka Māori-English Dictionary (2016) defines tikanga as, “the customary system of values and practices that have developed over time and are deeply embedded in the social context”.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

following events. As the events focused on serious challenges such as global poverty and climate change, creating a culture of positivity is both practical and impressive. Positive emotions have added benefits such as increasing resilience, learning and positive behaviour (Fredrickson et al., 2008; Kok et al., 2013), further supporting their importance in civic interventions.

As not all young people reach their full potential (Kuhn, 2009), ReGeneration and like programming (e.g. Blythe & Harré, 2012) provide windows into the environments and experiences that support positive development. Future research could apply different methods of investigation, including qualitative research exploring what participants believed were the key factors that lead to (or didn't lead to) positive outcomes, longitudinal design, more measures (e.g., social trust, self-efficacy), and exploring ways by which to investigate key ReGeneration models such as tuakana-teina and biculturalism experimentally.

## Conclusions

In the time it took to write this thesis, the worldwide state of democracy has deteriorated (Diamond, 2016). What started as an interest in civic engagement as a tool for positive development and effective community programming has turned into a pressing concern for global human rights, freedom and dignity. Participation and public support for democracy is invaluable – both in terms of protecting democracy within nations and modelling the benefits of democracies overseas. Democracy is a continuum that needs to be consistently nurtured and protected (Keric, 2015). There are several examples of recent undemocratic practices and processes in New Zealand (Edwards, 2016; Hager, 2014), and worldwide examples of rising autocracy and authoritarianism (Diamond, 2016). The importance of democracy has never been so apparent in recent history as it is today, making youth disengagement and low voter turnout especially alarming.



That being said, there are plenty of examples of young people making a positive difference in their communities and globally. In New Zealand, the Unmask Palm Oil campaign<sup>22</sup>, started by an Auckland-based secondary student, is working towards mandatory labelling of palm oil, so consumers can demand the use of sustainable palm oil, and reduce the tremendous social and environmental degradation caused by poorly managed plantations. In Wellington, young people started and manage ActionStation<sup>23</sup> – an independent, member-led not-for-profit organisation that stands for a fair society, healthy environment and economic fairness. ActionStation, and organisations like it (e.g., One Percent Collective<sup>24</sup>, Enspiral<sup>25</sup>, Gapfiller<sup>26</sup>) are powerful democratic tools that provide platforms for participation. Potentially rich areas for future research include investigating New Zealand-based civic programming and organisations, longitudinal design, the roles of generosity and reflection in promoting civic values, and exploring the diverse ways different ethnic groups participate in and express civic engagement.

Since experts claim this is the “most dangerous moment for liberal democracy since the end of World War II” (Diamond, 2016, p. 6), I believe it is important to investigate what cultivates civic engagement, alongside more common research on predictors and models. The present thesis explored three interventions in the hope of increasing and elucidating civic engagement in New Zealand. Results suggest that young changemaker events (ReGeneration) increased both civic intentions and civic values, and reflecting and writing on recent events

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<sup>22</sup> [unmaskpalmoil.com](http://unmaskpalmoil.com)

<sup>23</sup> [www.actionstation.org.nz](http://www.actionstation.org.nz)

<sup>24</sup> [onepercentcollective.org](http://onepercentcollective.org) – a collective of people who give 1% of their income to the Kiwi-based causes they care about.

<sup>25</sup> [enspiral.com](http://enspiral.com) – Wellington-based social enterprise ventures and social entrepreneurs working together with shared vision and values.

<sup>26</sup> [gapfiller.org.nz](http://gapfiller.org.nz) - a creative urban regeneration initiative that facilitates a wide range of temporary projects, events, installations and amenities in Christchurch.

### Increasing Civic Engagement

can increase civic values. Thus, this thesis contributed a small piece to the complex social puzzle of civic engagement.

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**Appendix A****Demographic Questions**

Age \_\_\_\_\_

Gender\_\_\_\_\_

**Socio-economic Status (SES)**

What is your father's (or male caregiver's) occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

What is your mother's (or female caregiver's) occupation? \_\_\_\_\_

**Ethnic Group**

What ethnic group(s) do you identify with?

Asian

Māori

Pacific Peoples

Pākehā/

Other

New Zealand European

## Appendix B

### Civic Intentions Scale

Read each statement and circle the number that best describes how true that statement is for you or how much you agree with it. There are no right or wrong answers; just write down what first comes to you. If a statement is unclear, ask for an explanation. If it still unclear or doesn't apply to you, put a "?"

When you think about the next few years, how likely are you to do the following?

1 = not at all likely, 2 = not likely, 3 = maybe, 4 = likely, 5 = very likely

1. Do volunteer work to help needy people. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Get involved in issues like health or safety that affect your community. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Work with a group to solve a problem in the community where you live. \_\_\_\_\_
4. Vote on a regular basis. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Advertise or support a candidate. \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Factor Analysis

#### AEC Civic Duty Scale

How much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree

1. It's not really my problem if my neighbours are in trouble and need help. (R) \_
2. I believe I can make a difference in my community. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I often think about doing things so that people in the future can have things better. \_\_\_\_\_
4. It is important to me to contribute to my community and society. \_\_\_\_\_

How important to you are the following statements?

1=not at all important, 2 = not important, 3 = not sure, 4 = important, 5=extremely important

5. Helping to reduce hunger and poverty in the world. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Helping to make sure all people are treated fairly. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Helping to make the world a better place to live in. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Helping other people. \_\_\_\_\_
9. Speaking up for equality (everyone should have the same rights and opportunities). \_\_\_\_

How well does each of the following statements represent you?

1=not well at all, 2 = not well, 3 = not sure, 4 = well, 5=very well

10. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them. \_\_\_\_
11. When I see someone being treated unfairly, I don't feel sorry for them. (R) \_\_\_\_
12. I feel sorry for other people who don't have what I have. \_\_\_\_\_



Table A.1

*Civic Duty Scale 12 Factor Correlations*

	R1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	R11
2	.2										
3	.3	.8									
4	.3	.8	.8								
5	.2	.3	.2	.2							
6	.2	.4	.4	.4	.7						
7	.4	.5	.5	.6	.5	.6					
8	.4	.4	.4	.4	.5	.6	.6				
9	.2	.4	.4	.5	.7	.8	.5	.6			
10	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.5	.4	.6	.6		
R11	.4	.3	.3	.3	.1	.2	.3	.4	.2	.3	
12	-.0	.2	.2	.2	.3	.3	.1	.1	.3	.1	.1

Note. See AEC Civic Duty Scale above for question numbers.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

**Revised Civic Values Scale**

How much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree

1. I believe I can make a difference in my community. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I often think about doing things so that people in the future can have things better. \_\_\_\_
3. It is important to me to contribute to my community and society. \_\_\_\_\_

How important to you are the following statements?

1=not at all important, 2 = not important, 3 = not sure, 4 = important, 5=extremely important

4. Helping to reduce hunger and poverty in the world. \_\_\_\_\_
5. Helping to make sure all people are treated fairly. \_\_\_\_\_
6. Helping to make the world a better place to live in. \_\_\_\_\_
7. Helping other people. \_\_\_\_\_
8. Speaking up for equality (everyone should have the same rights and opportunities). \_\_\_\_

How well does each of the following statements represent you?

1=not well at all, 2 = not well, 3 = not sure, 4 = well, 5=very well

9. When I see someone being taken advantage of, I want to help them. \_\_\_\_

## Appendix D

### Community Belonging Scale

Please use the scale below to describe how you feel right now (even if you have felt differently at other times).

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=disagree somewhat, 4=neutral,

5=agree somewhat, 6=agree, 7=strongly agree

1. I feel included in my community. \_\_\_\_\_
2. I feel well integrated into my community. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I feel a sense of belonging with my community. \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix E****Generosity Scale**

Please use the scale below to describe how you feel right now (even if you have felt differently at other times).

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree

1. When one of my loved ones needs my attention, I really try to slow down and give them the time and help they need. \_\_\_\_
2. I am known by family and friends as someone who makes time to pay attention to others' problems. \_\_\_\_\_
3. I'm the kind of person who is willing to go the "extra mile" to help take care of my friends, relatives, and acquaintances. \_\_\_\_
4. When friends or family members experience something upsetting or discouraging I make a special point of being kind to them. \_\_\_\_
5. When it comes to my personal relationships with others, I am a very generous person. \_\_\_\_\_
6. It makes me very happy to give to other people in ways that meet their needs. \_\_\_\_\_
7. It is just as important to me that other people around me are happy and thriving as it is that I am happy and thriving. \_\_\_\_
8. My decisions are often based on concern for the welfare of others. \_\_\_\_
9. I am usually willing to risk my own feelings being hurt in the process if I stand a chance of helping someone else in need. \_\_\_\_\_
10. I make it a point to let my friends and family know how much I love and appreciate them. \_\_\_\_

## Appendix F

### Neighbourhood Connection Scale

How much do you agree or disagree with each of these statements?

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=neutral, 4=agree, 5= strongly agree

1. Adults in my town or city listen to what I have to say. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Adults in my town or city make me feel important. \_\_\_\_\_
3. In my town or city, I feel like I matter to people. \_\_\_\_\_
4. In my neighbourhood, there are lots of people who care about me. \_\_\_\_\_
5. If one of my neighbours saw me do something wrong, he or she would tell one of my parents. \_\_\_\_\_
6. My teachers really care about me. \_\_\_\_\_

**Appendix G****Well-being Scale**

Please use the scale below to describe how you feel right now (even if you have felt differently at other times).

How often do you feel... (1 never – 6 everyday)

1. Happy. \_\_\_\_\_
2. Interested in life. \_\_\_\_\_
3. Satisfied. \_\_\_\_\_
4. That you had something important to contribute to society. \_\_\_\_
5. That you belonged to a community (like a social group or your neighbourhood). \_\_\_\_
6. That our society is becoming a better place for people like you. \_\_\_\_\_
7. That people are basically good. \_\_\_\_\_
8. That the way our society works makes sense to you. \_\_\_\_\_
9. That you liked most parts of your personality. \_\_\_\_\_
10. Good at managing the responsibilities of your daily life. \_\_\_\_\_
11. That you had warm and trusting relationships with others. \_\_\_\_
12. That you had experiences that challenged you to grow and become a better person. \_\_\_\_
13. Confident to think or express your own ideas and opinions. \_\_\_\_\_
14. That your life has a sense of direction or meaning to it. \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix H

### Mood Scale

The following scale consists of a number of words that describe different feelings and emotions. Read each item and then mark the appropriate answer in the space next to the word. Indicate the extent you feel this way right now, at the present moment.

1=not at all, 2=a little, 3=moderately, 4=quite a bit, 5= extremely

_____ interested	_____ irritable
_____ distressed	_____ alert
_____ excited	_____ ashamed
_____ upset	_____ inspired
_____ strong	_____ nervous
_____ guilty	_____ determined
_____ scared	_____ attentive
_____ hostile	_____ jittery
_____ enthusiastic	_____ active
_____ proud	_____ afraid

## Appendix I

### Happiness Scale

For each of the following statements and/or questions, please circle the point on the scale that you feel is most appropriate in describing you.

1. In general, I consider myself:

not a happy person   1   2   3   4   5   6   7 a very happy person

2. Compared to most of my peers, I consider myself:

less happy   1   2   3   4   5   6   7 more happy

3. Some people are generally very happy. They enjoy life regardless of what is going on, getting the most out of everything. To what extent does this characterisation describe you?

not at all   1   2   3   4   5   6   7 a great deal

4. Some people are generally *not* very happy. Although they are not depressed, they never seem as happy as they might be. To what extent does this characterisation describe you?

not at all   1   2   3   4   5   6   7 a great deal



## Appendix J

### Study 3 Writing Task Instructions

**Volunteering writing task instructions.** Please write in detail about a time when you volunteered (gave your time to people or organisations without being paid). For this task, try to let yourself go and write continuously for 10 minutes about your emotions and thoughts, without worrying about spelling or grammar. Describe what you did, why you did it, how you felt and if anyone else was involved. The researcher will let you know when your 10 minutes is done, or you can time yourself.

**Donation writing task instructions.** Please write in detail about a time that you gave money to a charity or person who needed it. For this task, try to let yourself go and write continuously for 10 minutes about your emotions and thoughts, without worrying about spelling or grammar. Describe what you did, why you did it, how you felt and if anyone else was involved. The researcher will let you know when your 10 minutes is done, or you can time yourself.

**Positive event writing task instructions.** Please write in detail about a positive event or experience you had with another person or other people. For this task, try to let yourself go and write continuously for 10 minutes about your emotions and thoughts, without worrying about spelling or grammar. Describe what you did, why you did it, how you felt and if anyone else was involved. The researcher will let you know when your 10 minutes is done, or you can time yourself.

**Objective event writing task instructions.** Please write objectively and in detail about a recent event or experience. For this task, try to write continuously for 10 minutes, without worrying about spelling or grammar. Describe what you did and if anyone else was involved as dispassionately as you can . . . without mentioning your emotions, opinions, or beliefs. The researcher will let you know when your 10 minutes is done, or you can time yourself.

## **Appendix K**

### **Study 3 Windfall Spending Instructions**

As part of this survey development we are trying to examine experiences that make people *happy*.

For this reason, you have been randomly selected to

Receive a windfall gift of \$10. You will find \$10 in the envelope in front of you.

Please take your \$10 out of the bag right now, and put it in your pocket (or if you don't have a pocket place it by your phone or on the desk beside you).

Please put your money in your pocket before reading further.

Your instructions are to spend your windfall in whatever way will make you happiest. You must spend your windfall by 5pm today – before you take the final survey.

Take a moment now to think about how you'd like to spend your windfall.

To help you, we've included some ideas for you on the next page.

The aim of this windfall is for you to spend it in a way that will make you happiest. You can spend it on yourself, on a friend, on a gift for a family member, or you can donate it to charity. To make this process easier we have selected two charities you can donate to. If you choose to give to a charity please indicate how much you want to give below and then leave that amount in your envelope. We will give the total money donated the charity once we have completed the study. To ensure anonymity in spending choice, everyone will place their envelope in the box outside the door on their way out. You must spend your entire windfall today – before you complete your final survey at 5pm.

**Dunedin Red Cross Refugee Resettlement Programme.** Resettlement is a life-changing and challenging experience. Refugees arrive in a country where the society, language and culture are often completely different from their own. Trained Red Cross staff and volunteers provide a community orientation, helping to understand Kiwi culture and navigate systems, and connecting people to services they require.

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Dunedin Red Cross Refugee Resettlement Programme.

**Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.** Otago's yellow-eyed penguins are battling for survival, with the region's population hitting a 25-year low. To address this, the Trust has a comprehensive coastal conservation programme. Measures include: habitat restoration, predator control, research projects, nursery, and education.

I would like to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_ to the Yellow-eyed Penguin Trust.”

Once participants had read the windfall instructions they posted their envelope into a box just outside the door. At 5pm on the same day participants were emailed a link to the third and final survey. Along with the well-being and civic engagement scales, the final survey asked the participants to briefly describe how they spent their windfall.

## **Appendix L**

### **Study One Auxiliary Methods**

#### **Study One Auxiliary Participants**

***Psychology.*** The psychology group were third year tertiary students studying social psychology at the University of Otago (N = 181, mean age = 20.87, 53 males). They completed two surveys; one at the start of their course, and one five days later.

***Physical Education (PE).*** The PE group were second year tertiary students studying physical education at the University of Otago (N = 55, mean age = 20.75, 29 males). They completed two surveys; one at the start of their course, and one five days later.

***Secondary Students.*** The secondary group were students attending a decile 8 secondary school in Otago, New Zealand (N = 42, mean age = 16.62, 19 males). They completed one survey at the start of the school year.

#### **Study One Auxiliary Measures**

There were two groups of measures that were not included in the body of the present thesis, well-being measures and civic engagement measures. Measures are listed in Table L.1 and L.2, including the author and an example item.

Table L.1

*Well-being Scales List*

<b>Name</b>	<b>Author</b>	<b>Example Item</b>
Self-esteem	Robins et al., 2001	I have high self-esteem.
General Self-efficacy	Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2010	I can usually handle whatever comes my way.
General Self-efficacy ( <i>short</i> )	Schwarzer & Jerusalem, 2010	<i>As above but missing two items so not reliable or valid.</i>
Mental Health (Well-being)	Keyes, 2009	How often do you feel that you liked most parts of your personality
Subjective Happiness	Lyubomirsky & Lepper, 1999	In general, I consider myself, (not a happy person... a very happy person)
Life Satisfaction	Diener et al., 1985	In most ways my life is close to ideal.
Positive and negative affect (PANAS)	Watson et al., 1988	Please indicate the extent to which you feel interested right now.

## Increasing Civic Engagement

Table L.2

### *Civic Engagement Scales List*

Name	Author	Example Item
Civic Intentions	Flanagan et al., 2007	How likely is it that you would do volunteer work on a regular basis.
Civic Values	Zaff et al., 2010	I believe I can make a difference in my community.
Civic Skills	Flanagan et al., 2007	To what extent do you feel you can contact an elected official about a problem.
Civic Participation	Zaff et al., 2010	During the last 12 months, how many times have you helped a neighbour?
Community Belonging	Sheldon & Bettencourt, 2002	I feel included in my community.
Generosity	Smith & Hill, 2009	When it comes to my personal relationships with others, I am a very generous person.
Participatory Citizen	Westheimer & Kahne, 2002	By working with others in the community I can make things better.
Justice Oriented Citizen	Westheimer & Kahne, 2002	In the future, I will work with others to change unjust laws.
Group Involvement	Flanagan et al., 2007	Are you currently involved in any sports groups (or teams)?
Activism (revised)	Kerpelman, 1969	During the last 12 months, how many times have you heard speakers talk about political, social, or environmental issues?
Political Talk	Flanagan et al., 2007	I talk to my parents/guardians about politics.
Social Trust	Flanagan et al., 2007	In general, most people can be trusted.

Scales were added and taken out of questionnaires over the course of the ReGeneration and Filmmaking Road Trips based on stakeholder input and preliminary analyses. Three key concerns here were brevity of the questionnaires, reliability, and validity in terms of the programmes and the participant outcomes. For the tertiary control

groups (Psychology, PE) that weren't included in the main text of the present thesis, there was less concern for brevity. For the secondary control group the school principle and teachers had input into what scales they wanted included.

### Study One Auxiliary Procedure

The following two tables (L.3 and L.4) indicate which groups completed which scales. The order that the groups are presented in the tables are the order in which the completed the scales chronologically (i.e., ReGeneration Road Trip South Island completed the first set of surveys, followed by the Filmmaking group South Island, etc.). In this way the following tables also serve as timelines for my research.

Table L.3

#### *Well-being Measures Completed by Each Group*

	Well-being	Self- efficacy	Self-esteem	Life Satisfaction	Happiness	PANAS
ReGen Roady S		SF	✓	✓		
Film S		SF	✓	✓		
ReGen Roady N		SF	✓	✓		
Film N		SF		✓		
ReGen Jam	✓	✓	✓	✓		
Survey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Psych	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
PE	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Secondary	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	

*Note.* ReGen Roady S; ReGeneration road trip South Island; Film S, filmmaking group South Island; ReGen Roady N; ReGeneration road trip North Island; Film N, filmmaking group North Island; ReGen Jam, ReGeneration summer jam; Survey, surveying group; Psych, psychology students; PE, physical education students; Secondary, secondary students; SF, short form.